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Oflot chief faces new storm over free flights

Davis had official warning

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

The position of Peter Davis as the National Lottery regulator appeared virtually untenable last night after it was revealed that he accepted free flights from a company involved in running the lottery despite an explicit warning by the Government not to do so.

The latest revelation came after a day in which Mr Davis fought to hold on to his £84,000-a-year post, and Tory MPs mounted an effort to defend him. But last night some MPs said the latest disclosures in a written Commons answer by Virginia Bottomley could seal his fate.

The National Heritage Secretary carefully sidestepped demands for his sacking by Opposition MPs when she faced questions in the Commons. "It is not my view that a knee-jerk reaction is appropriate in these circumstances," she said.

Labour MPs said she had left Mr Davis "swinging in the wind" but she later disclosed to Alan Williams, the shadow MP who first uncovered the free flights at a select committee hearing last night, that Mr Davis had gone on the flights against official advice.

Opposition leaders said Mr Davis had been guilty of "misjudgement", rather than corruption, but his position was untenable. Mrs Bottomley revealed that her Department's officials told the Director General not to accept any free flights or accommodation from GTECH, the US company supplying the equipment for the National Lottery organisation. Cannot, before he went to the United States.

"In August 1994, in discussing the Director General's proposed US trip, officials of my Department advised that as Director General would need to ensure that all due propriety was observed and that the cost of flights and accommodation should be borne by Oflot and not their hosts," Mrs Bottomley said.

Mr Davis admitted last Monday, under cross-examination by Mr Williams, at a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, that he had taken five free flights across the United States in a private jet owned by GTECH. Mrs Bottomley said her Department had known about the flights for only a week before it was revealed at the select committee by Mr Davis.

But she went on to say in the written answer that Oflot was a non-ministerial Department and therefore responsible "for implementing its own hospitality and travel arrangements taking into account the principles and rules set out in the Civil Service Management Code". She added that Oflot was under no obligation to clear with, "or inform my department, about their detailed arrangements."

A spokesman for Oflot denied Mr Davis had put his job in doubt by flouting National Heritage's instructions. He said it was up to Mr Davis whether he took National Heritage officials' advice. "In effect they can't dictate what he does because Oflot is run separately from National Heritage."

The Oflot spokesman said Mr Davis had no plans to meet Mrs Bottomley personally. "She will be talking to her Permanent Secretary. No meeting has been pencilled in."

Mr Williams said she had created a "rogue elephant" with Oflot, which was not directly answerable to her for its actions. She may announce her decision about Mr Davis's future today, after speculation that she was taking her time to ensure that she was not leaving herself open to legal challenge.

Mr Davis made it clear he would not go voluntarily. After meeting Mrs Bottomley's senior officials yesterday to explain his conduct, Mr Davis said: "I see no reason to resign."

Leading article, page 16

PM fuels hopes of Europe referendum

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

John Major took a further significant step towards a firm commitment to holding a referendum on the single currency yesterday as the Government faced another cliffhanger vote tonight on Europe.

But although it now looks inevitable that Mr Major will promise before the election that he would not enter a single currency without a referendum, ministers have yet to resolve the crucial question of whether the Cabinet would have to unite behind any decision to join a currency union.

Mr Major made it clear in the Commons yesterday that a referendum commitment was before ministers. "For consideration" after Douglas Hurd, his former Foreign Secretary, went public for the first time in indicating his strong support for a referendum.

The exchanges came as the government was threatened with a possible parliamentary defeat tonight over European fishery quotas. A Eurosceptic rebellion has been fuelled by alarm over the decision by the Madrid summit to confirm a timetable which will mean Britain's deciding early in 1998 whether to join EMU and adopt the "Euro".

Mr Major brushed aside a claim in the Commons yesterday by William Cash, the leading Eurosceptic MP, that he had "sold the pass" by not challenging the "determination of Germany and capitulating France" to go ahead with further European integration.

But the Prime Minister further alarmed Euro-sceptics by confirming that Britain would not have to rejoin the European Exchange Rate Mechanism for two years to qualify for monetary union. Several prominent Tory and Labour

TURN TO PAGE 2

Britain's highest lights of Christmas



Docklands beacon: Britain's tallest building, at Canary Wharf in east London, flooded with colour yesterday for a preview of the light show created by the artists Peter Fink and Anne Bean. The tower will be lit up by the display every night from today until 16 January. Photograph: Peter Macdarmid

Red flag is raised over Russia again

PHIL REEVES
and HELEN WOMACK
Moscow

Despite the memory of 70 years of Soviet tyranny, Russians have ushered the Communist Party back into the centre of national politics and put renewed pressure on Boris Yeltsin to restrain Russia's headlong dash towards free market reforms.

The beleaguered Mr Yeltsin, who is still recovering from a heart attack, will today meet his Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, to discuss the government's strategy amid growing speculation that it will include finally sacrificing his pro-Western Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev.

Although the result reflected the anger of millions of Russians impoverished by the first stages of reform, it fell short of an overwhelming victory. Free marketeers won enough votes for the State Duma, or lower house, to ensure the Communists and their allies do not have total control.

International observers said the poll was fair, although there will be deep suspicion over claims by the Ministry of Defence that most of the armed forces voted for the government-sponsored Our Home Is Russia party.

With nearly half the votes counted, the Communist Party had 21.9 per cent. Second were the ultra-nationalists of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, whose 11.1 per cent showing was poorer than the landslide vote they received in 1993, but better than most predictions.

Western markets, investors and diplomats reacted calmly to the long-predicted Communist victory. Although the party leader, Gennady Zyuganov, delights the grass roots with Soviet-style rhetoric, on election day he promised to conserve the best achievements of the reformers.

The big surprise was the poor performance of the hotly-tipped nationalist Congress of

Russian Communities (CRC). But its leader, General Alexander Lebed — a possible presidential candidate next year — proved popular in his power base, the arms-producing town of Tula, and will be able to claim one of the 225 seats set aside for constituency MPs.

Mr Chernomyrdin said last night that he was pleased with the performance of Our Home Is Russia, which won an estimated 9.6 per cent, despite Russia's economic problems. He must also have been im-



Zyuganov: Putting pressure on Yeltsin to curb reforms

mensely relieved that the elections went ahead peacefully — the exception was Chechnya, where fighting continued to be fierce.

Apart from the pro-reform Yabloko party (8.4 per cent) few of the other 39 parties on offer will collect the minimum five per cent needed to enter the 450-seat assembly, where half the seats are shared out among parties.

The Communist vote came mainly from the undeveloped provinces, while Muscovites and other city dwellers who have started to feel the benefits of reform backed Our Home and Yabloko.

Last night the focus of attention was already shifting to the far more important presidential poll due next June. Further reports, page 10

Leading article, page 16

IN BRIEF

Father killed his children
A father faced with a mountain of debt killed himself and his four young children. Page 3

Mensa chief's sideline
Mensa's top official ran his own business from the organisation's headquarters. Page 3

Rail line privatised
The first rail line was privatised last night despite continuing legal confusion. Page 2

Today's weather
Rain and sleet in many areas of the UK. Section Two, page 21

Why a good mood means bad decisions

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

A good mood may be bad for people faced with problem-solving tasks that demand a high degree of logical thought and planning, according to a study. Researchers say the brain may be too busy retrieving "feelgood" memories to enhance the positive mood to focus fully on the task in hand. Someone in a neutral mood can devote themselves solely to problem solving, they argue.

A team from the Department of Psychology at Warwick University analysed the reasoning performance of individuals whose moods had been manipulated. To achieve a good mood, one group were shown a comedy programme; a neutral mood was triggered in another group by showing them a documentary; a bad mood was induced in a third group by showing them a documentary on stress. The groups were then given two reasoning tasks. The neutral mood group performed

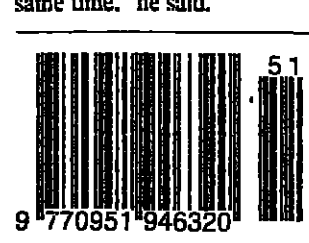
well, but the positive and negative mood states of the other two groups affected their performance.

In another test the groups were given a psychological test in which a block is moved around to achieve a given outcome. All three groups took the same time to plan the first move, but the good mood group then took twice as many moves as the others to attain the goal. Dr Mike Oaksford, a senior lecturer in psychology, who will today present the results of the

study on the opening day of the British Psychological Society Conference in London, said: "The positive group put as much time into planning their first move as the other groups but their construction of a plan was much less efficient."

Dr Oaksford, who will receive the BPS Spearman Medal today for his work on human reasoning, said that the positive mood state may be affecting the brain's capacity for "working memory" — a space devoted to thinking, planning, and problem solving

— as good memories are being retrieved at the same time. "It is like having a blackboard to work your problems out on but your memory is writing on that blackboard at the same time," he said.



section ONE

BUSINESS 18-22 COMMENT 16,17 CROSSWORD 26 GAZETTE 14
LAW REPORT 14 LEADING ARTICLES 16 LETTERS 16 NEWS 2-13
OBITUARIES 14 SHARES 21 SPORT 23-26 UNIT TRUSTS 22

section TWO

ARTS 6-10 CHESS 22 CROSSWORD 22 FASHION 12,13
FEEDBACK 22 LIFE 4 LISTINGS 20,21 MEDIA 16,17
REVIEWS 10 TELEVISION & RADIO 23,24 WEATHER 21

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Rail privatisation: First line moves into private hands as Stagecoach signs contract for South West Trains

First privatised rail line is agreed

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
and COLIN BROWN

The first rail line was privatised last night despite continuing legal confusion and a change in the rules governing the franchise process by the Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport.

Final contracts were signed to hand over control of South West Trains to Stagecoach, Britain's largest bus company, even though a legal challenge, against another of the first three franchises, LTS, was due

to be heard today in the Court of Appeal.

Sir George Young showed his determination in bulldozing through privatisation when he announced in Parliament yesterday that he was changing the rules governing the allocation of franchises following last week's Appeal Court decision that the process of drawing up new minimum train timetables had been unlawful for five of the first seven lines. The case rested on the fact that the Government had said that the minimum "passenger service requirements",

the minimum level of service to be provided by private operators, had to be "based on" the existing service level.

Yesterday, in his statement, Sir George said that the franchising director, Roger Salmon, would now be required to draw up contracts with private operators to ensure services were "broadly similar" to those operated immediately prior to franchising. There would be a "core service level" that would be protected.

Sir George's statement also said that the franchising director should, "when considering the award of future franchises", take account of bidders' commitments and plans to operate more trains than the minimum set in the PSR. It is thought that most of the bidders for the early franchises will in fact operate more trains than the minimum but last night no details had yet emerged of Stagecoach's bid.

While Labour accused the Secretary of State of "fiddling" the guidelines to meet the legal requirements, Sir George's statement appeared to have succeeded in buying off Tory MPs who were threatening to rebel against the Government.

Two of the potential rebels last night welcomed the statement saying they felt it would require the franchising director to provide services which were either as good as or better than those offered at the moment.

"I welcome the minimum requirement to ensure that services at present BR rates are continued," said Tim Rathbone, one of the Tory MPs. He said he was prepared to accept ministers' assurances that it could lead to better services. Sir

Keith Speed also welcomed the statement. The Tory MPs are planning to see Sir George today to press for more investment to be guaranteed and one, David Nicholson, MP for Taunton, will raise concerns over service levels.

Campaigners against rail privatisation said the new wording does nothing to allay fears about potential rail cuts. Keith Bill, of the Save Our Railways Campaign, which had brought the successful legal challenge, said: "Broadly similar" does not seem to mean anything different from 'based on' and yet on some lines they are putting forward 50 per cent reductions in the number of trains. That's not 'broadly similar'."

Meanwhile, Thurrock council yesterday lost a challenge in the High Court seeking a judicial review on the London, Tilbury and Southend contract, which the Appeal Court found had been drawn up unlawfully but which was allowed through because campaigners had not tabled their legal objection in time. Thurrock is taking its case to appeal today.

Thousands of Christmas shoppers were evacuated from the Bond Street area of Oxford Street as armed police searched for the men, both in their late twenties, who were seen entering the unstaffed National Westminster Bank at midday.

IN BRIEF

Armed bank robbers escape

Two armed raiders escaped with more than £100,000 yesterday after robbing security guards delivering money to cashpoint machines in the West End of London.

Thousands of Christmas shoppers were evacuated from the Bond Street area of Oxford Street as armed police searched for the men, both in their late twenties, who were seen entering the unstaffed National Westminster Bank at midday.

The street was sealed off for nearly two hours as a dozen police vehicles ringed the building and armed units searched the roof and rooms. Five men were later led away from the bank - it is understood that they were found locked in a vault.

School battle

The battle to save Hackney Downs boys' school in east London from closure was renewed in the Court of Appeal as parents and pupils challenged a High Court ruling last week that there was nothing unlawful or unreasonable in the decision of Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, to close the school on the recommendation of a government-appointed "hit squad". Inspectors had said it was failing to provide adequate education.

Temazepam action

The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, introduced tough measures to curb abuse of temazepam, the most widely prescribed sleeping pill with about 7 million prescriptions a year. From 15 January 15 anyone caught in unlawful possession could face up to two years' imprisonment, an unlimited fine or both.

Taxi rape

A hunt for a maroon and black, traditional London taxi cab was launched by police seeking a rapist who attacked a 23-year-old woman who was picked up in the Mall, close to Buckingham Palace in London. The taxi trade disclosed that there were nearly 2,000 traditional cabs on the city's streets which were used as private vehicles, some illegally touting for trade. Police said the rape victim could have got into a rogue vehicle.

Teenager charged

Carl West, 19, was remanded in custody for three weeks when he appeared before Peterborough magistrates charged with the attempted murder of Paul Brighton, 44, who was critically injured when he went to investigate after a car was thrown through a window at his home on Saturday. Mr Brighton, whose skull was crushed, was "improving" in Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. Four teenagers charged with public order offences after the incident were given bail to appear in court on 6 February.

Murder hunt

Strathclyde Police launched a murder hunt after a body found on waste ground at a bus depot was identified as that of Mhairi Julian, 16, who lived nearby and had been missing since going to see a pantomime on Saturday. A post-mortem examination was being carried out.

Beatle burgled

Security was being stepped up at the £2m house in St John's Wood, north London, of the former Beatle Paul McCartney after it was raided by burglars while he visited his wife, Linda, at the Princess Grace Hospital where she was being treated for cancer.

Europe vote hope fuelled by Major

FROM PAGE 1

Euro-sceptics including Peter Shore, who raised the issue yesterday with Mr Major, had hoped that the stipulation would prevent British EMU membership in 1999 and appeared not to have realised that it had been removed.

Labour last night tabled a Commons amendment reflecting its argument that UK fishery quotas agreed 12 months ago would have been higher if Britain had played a more positive role in Europe. But they are far from confident of inflicting a defeat partly because as many as five of its MPs may be too ill to vote. The Ulster Unionists will meet before the vote today to decide how to vote. The increasing certainty of a commitment to a referendum if a Tory Cabinet takes a post-election decision to enter a single currency arises partly because of indications by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that despite his strong opposition to a plebiscite he would not threaten to resign over a Cabinet decision to promise one.

But Mr Major and his colleagues still have to resolve the question of when to make such a promise - and whether to stipulate whether if a Tory government decided in favour of EMU the Cabinet would have to adopt collective responsibility.

Some ministers are arguing that a future Tory prime minister should follow the example of Harold Wilson in 1975 and allow his Cabinet colleagues the freedom to campaign according to their personal beliefs in any referendum. But the argument pressed privately on Mr Major by Mr Hurd, when he was Foreign Secretary, was that he should insist that, once having taken a decision to join EMU, the Cabinet would have to campaign with one voice.

The second course would pose acute problems for Euro-sceptic Cabinet opponents of EMU such as Michael Portillo and Michael Howard who would then face the dilemma of having to support a cause they did not believe in or leave the Cabinet.



Uncertain future: A fisherman brings ashore the catch at Lowestoft, Suffolk yesterday

Photograph: Bryn Colton

Fishermen braced for the deepest of cuts

Quotas will hit family businesses, writes Danny Penman

The fishermen of Lowestoft were returning home yesterday to the prospect of another round of cuts in their industry. Nine vessels were in the Suffolk port and another four were in the North Sea steaming home. The fate of their industry will be decided on Thursday when European fisheries ministers complete their bartering and agree on next year's fishing quotas. The ministers are expected to agree to a 32 per cent cut in the amount of plaice and sole that can be landed by Europe's fishermen. The cuts will hit Lowestoft hard, which specialises in plaice and sole, but for many it is a small relief from the proposals put forward by fisheries scientists who called for a 47 per cent reduction.

"It's still absolutely awful," said Hugh Sims, chief executive of

Lowestoft Fish Producers' Organisation and spokesman for Colme Shipping Company, the largest fishing boat owner in the town.

"The conclusion we've come to is that they think more of the fish than the fishermen," he added. Colme Shipping runs 13 ships - at 40 metres they are far too big to be called boats - out of Lowestoft. Another operator has six but they only land their catches in Holland. The ships are multi-million pound affairs and come with the most effective fish locating and trawling equipment yet devised. Colme Shipping replaced two vessels four years ago at a cost of £6m. While in port over Christmas, the fishermen will be

relaxing but the support crews will be overhauling each ship's computers, global positioning system, sonar and radar. The high-tech ships have massive overheads and must be worked hard to make a profit. Insurance alone costs about £500,000 per ship. But the ships when working flat out can earn £40,000 for a 12-day trip. The captain will receive 10 per cent of the catch worth on average about £4,000 and an 18-year-old deck hand will earn about three per cent, or £1,200. "Forget the fishermen with his roll-neck jumper. He will arrive at the docks with his Jaguar and copy of the Financial Times rolled up under his arm. He will start up his computer before the engines," said Mr Sims.

The quota cuts will hit the profitability of the Lowestoft fleet. The running costs will remain the same but the revenue will be slashed by 32 per cent. For the fishermen of Lowestoft it is a boom and bust business. They have no holiday or sick pay and they live entirely by what they catch. For the town it has been mostly a bust industry. The numbers employed have declined by nearly 1,800 in the last 15 years. The industry now supports only about 800 people in the town. In Lowestoft the fishermen have invested in big powerful ships. Their strategy is the opposite to that employed by the Cornish fishermen based in Newlyn.

In Cornwall they have stuck with small boats and pursued higher-value prey. Colme Shipping sold their oldest and cheapest boat, The St Georges, to Stevenson's based in Newlyn last year. It became their newest and most expensive ship. The quota cuts may force a change of strategy on the Lowestoft fishing fleet. They have recently bought a 10m vessel which allows them to fish close to the coast.

"We may soon have to start pursuing the Cornish strategy," says Mr Sims. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food says it hopes the quota cuts will bring a period of stability. The industry has suffered lurches in the quantities of fish that could be landed from year to year, said

Ordtec man remanded in S Africa

CHRIS BLACKHURST and
ROBERT BLOCH,
Johannesburg

Paul Grecian, the former Ordtec director who had his conviction of supplying weapons to Iraq quashed last month by the Court of Appeal, was remanded in custody in South Africa yesterday.

Mr Grecian, who had his conviction in Britain overturned after the Court of Appeal heard evidence he had helped the British government and had been prevented by official gagging orders from presenting a fair defence, was arrested when he arrived in South Africa on Friday for a holiday. He was picked up by Interpol executing an arrest warrant issued on behalf of the United States gov-

ernment seeking to extradite him on identical charges. In Britain, his lawyer, Kevin Robinson, described the joint US move as "outrageous". His conviction, Mr Robinson said, had been overturned in this country, and, he pointed out, prosecutions against US executives involved in the same case had been abandoned by the US authorities.

A previous attempt by the US to obtain Mr Grecian's extradition from Britain is understood to have failed foul of the Government in this country which refused to cooperate with their request.

British Customs are suspected of having alerted the South Africans to his arrival.

"The US authorities are looking for him for fraud, forgery



Paul Grecian: Arrested after arriving for holiday

and supplying arms," Interpol's director for South Africa, Dave Bruce, told journalists yesterday. "We arrested him at Johannesburg International Airport

when he arrived on Friday because a warrant was in circulation and an Interpol red notice was issued in 176 countries."

He added that the US warrant did not depend on the British court's decision and that the South African government and Interpol would fight any attempt at bail pending his extradition to the US.

But lawyers representing Mr Grecian moved to have the warrant for his detention thrown out as well as seeking bail for his client.

Lawrence Hodas, a barrister acting for him, told the court: "There was no existing warrant for detention valid in the Republic of South Africa." He also rejected US claims that Mr Grecian was likely to flee if granted bail, saying his client

had shown his integrity during his long trial in Britain.

Mr Hodas said this was why the case should be thrown out of court as his client had already been tried and acquitted "on the very same charges".

He said Mr Grecian had met South African officials in London before his trip and received assurances that he could travel the country without problems.

The prosecution rejected the defence motions and requested a 14-day postponement because the evidence against Mr Grecian was in the US.

The bench instead gave the prosecution three days to prepare his case, and remanded Mr Grecian into custody until then without refusing or granting his bail application.

Nestlé keeps mum as last Rolo goes missing

Chocolate giant Nestlé came under fire last night - for snatching the last Rolo.

There used to be 11 of the caramel filled chocolates - famous for their "Do you love someone enough to give them your last Rolo?" commercials - in a tube. But Nestlé has reduced the number to 10 - without cutting the price.

The move was highlighted by the BBC1 consumer programme *Watchdog*, after a complaint from a viewer.

Nestlé defended its action, saying it had cut the packet size instead of raising the recommended retail price of 24p.

Sue Brewer, a mother of two from Oundle, Northampton, complained that Nestlé had

ruined her chocolate treat. She told *Watchdog* she normally gave each of her two sons five Rolos and spoiled herself by eating the last one. But the last time she bought a pack, the last Rolo had gone.

"I'm feeling cheated because I didn't find anyone who loved me enough to give me some chocolate at a fair price, or to be honest enough to print 'one less, same price' on the packet."

A Nestlé spokeswoman said other firms had raised prices of similar brands and said Rolos were still good value. "The action we have taken has enabled us to maintain the price at a competitive level and we believe Rolo offer excellent value for money," she added.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Austria	.....	Sch40	Norway	.....	£15.00
Belgium	.....	SP160	Italy	.....	£4.500
Canada	.....	SP300	Malaysia	.....	£16.500
Denmark	.....	SP120	Norway	.....	£4.500
France	.....	SP120	Portugal	.....	£16.500
Germany	.....	SP120	Spain	.....	£16.500
Greece	SP120	Sweden	£16.500
Ireland	SP120	Switzerland	£16.500
Japan	SP120	USA	£16.500

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Price war looms as mobile phone tariffs cut

GLENDIA COOPER

A mobile phone price war will start in the New Year as Vodafone, the United Kingdom's market leader, prepares to launch new cut-price tariffs, including per-second billing and free air-time.

The move is widely seen as a reaction to the success of Orange, which has tripled the number of its users in a year, and it is likely that Cellnet, Vodafone's biggest competitor, will follow suit.

The main beneficiary will be the customer, who can look forward to cheaper bills, according to both consumer groups and the networks themselves.

Last week, Vodafone met its service providers, who sell the phones directly to the public, to tell them of the four new tariffs on its digital service which they plan to incorporate per-second billing and free air-time.

The tariffs would come into force in April, but Vodafone will support any service providers who want to bring it in as early as 1 January. Its 2 million analogue phone users will not be eligible at the moment.

Until now, Vodafone has charged customers for a minimum of a minute for every call and 30-second units after that. It also levies a standing charge that does not include any air-time. The new tariffs are expected to knock between 10 and 15 per cent off Vodafone bills.

Vodafone at present has about 2.25 million users closely followed by Cellnet at 2.2 million. Mercury One-2-One has

about 380,000 and Orange 350,000. A spokesman for Vodafone confirmed that it was thinking of four new tariffs but refused to say whether it would incorporate per-second billing and air-time. He said the new tariffs would not replace the old ones but would exist alongside.

Cellnet, Vodafone's nearest competitor, is likely to follow suit. A spokesman for Cellnet said it was "actively considering" the idea, but no decision was likely before Christmas.

Mercury changed to per-second billing in September. "We have no problems with it, it's good news for customers," said a Mercury spokesman. "They are going to save money."

Linda Lennard, senior policy officer at the National Consumer Council, agreed. "We welcome anything that makes mobile phone charges more transparent," she said.

Lisa Gernon, group director of marketing for Orange, said it was "not surprising" that Vodafone was considering per-second billing. She said: "These tariffs show that they are taking us seriously. We predicted that this would happen within a year of our launch. It's taken longer but we're not surprised. I believe we offer a very sensible package which is better value for money."

She added that only Vodafone's digital customers would benefit. "It's not been recognised... that they're not offering anything to the 2 million analogue users."

Orange is also planning to get involved in overseas work. It is at present in talks with E-Plus,

the German mobile phone network, hoping to come to an agreement which would allow Orange phones to operate in Germany.

The price war this Christmas has been sober in comparison to last year, which was a record year. An estimated 450,000 phone users were connected last December alone. Mercury, Cellnet and Vodafone have decided on offering £50 back if people sign up in November and December rather than going for more elaborate gimmicks.

Last year Mercury promised that anyone buying its One-2-One mobile phones after 8 November would be entitled to unlimited free calls on Christmas Day. However, massive demand meant many callers were unable to get through. Mercury reported that at least 20 people had spent more than 12 hours on the telephone. One person spent 12 hours on the phone to Pakistan.

A spokesman from the Telecom Users' Association warned people to think carefully before buying a mobile phone as a gift - more than 20,000 mobile phones will be bought in the Dixons group's stores in this week alone.

He said: "A mobile phone is for life, not just for Christmas. You may think it's great to buy granny a phone but remember you are buying a phone that may cost £300 for £50 or even a tenner. That's a substantial discount and you may find yourself in a contract for 12 months - or counting the three-month cancellation period - 15. You have to make your choice carefully."

The mobile phone labyrinth: How to find the right tariff



	CONNECTION FEE	YEARLY RENTAL	MONTHLY CHARGE	PEAK RATE TIMES	PEAK RATE PER MINUTE	CHEAP RATE PER MINUTE
VODAPHONE						
Low Call	£ 25	178.24	12.77	Mon to Fri 0800 to 1900	42.5p	17p
Personal World	£ 25	205	15	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1900	35p	15p
CELLNET						
Occasional Caller	£ 25	180	12.77	Mon to Fri 0800 to 1900	42.5p	17p
Frequent Caller	£ 50	350	25	Mon to Sat 0800 to 2200	25p	10p
Regular Caller Plus	£ 25	205	15	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1900	35p	15p
Frequent Caller Plus	£ 50	350	25	Mon to Sat 0800 to 2200	25p	10p
MERCURY ONE-2-ONE						
Bronze	£ 29.79	na*	15	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1800	25p	5p
Silver	£ 29.79	na*	25	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1800	15p	5p
Gold	£ 29.79	na*	35	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1800	15p	5p
ORANGE						
talk 15	£ 30	210	15 (inc 15 mins of calls)	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1900	25p	12.5p
talk 60	£ 30	330	25 (inc 60 mins of calls)	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1900	20p	10p
talk 200	£ 30	630	50 (inc 200 mins of calls)	Mon to Fri 0700 to 1900	18p	9p

*Not applicable. Mercury has nine-month contracts

Man killed in row over dog

A man killed his neighbour with a crowbar in a row over a barking dog, a jury was told yesterday.

Nicholas Farnell, 32, lost his temper in an argument with Willy Pottage, 56, and his wife after they went out leaving their puppy barking in their garden, Winchester Crown Court was told.

Michael Sayers QC, for the prosecution, said the Pottages, of Elgar Walk, Waterlooville, Hampshire, had bought the dog a few weeks earlier.

"In the week or so before the incident, when they were out, the puppy would be left in the

garden. Whilst in the garden, the puppy used to bark a lot and this barking apparently upset the defendant."

On 6 May, the Pottages went shopping, again leaving the puppy in their garden. As they returned to Elgar Walk, Mr Farnell, a roofer, complained about the noise, the court was told.

Although Mr Pottage apologised and said that the dog would grow out of it, Farnell continued his complaint. He accused the couple of cruelty to the animal and threatened to report them to the RSPCA. Becoming irritated, Mr Pot-

tage swore at Farnell and told him to go away.

Farnell, who denies murder but admits a charge of manslaughter, went to his car and returned with a crowbar, saying: "You want some, do you?"

The jury was told that he hit Mr Pottage on the head. As Mr Pottage fell, he banged his head on the road.

When his aghast wife said "Look what you have done", Farnell replied "Do you want some?"

Mr Pottage died in hospital four days later. His right jaw and the back of his skull had been

fractured. Farnell told police who were called to the scene: "We are neighbours and it was all over a dog."

"We had a huge argument. I was already upst and I just flipped and hit him over the head."

He later said he had not intended to cause Mr Pottage any harm, saying he had felt intimidated by the Pottages, who were both about 6ft tall.

Mr Sayers said the defence would argue that Farnell had not intended really serious harm and put forward a case for diminished responsibility. The trial continues today.

Methodists cool over unity

ANDREW BROWN
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Methodist Church and the Church of England will today issue a bulletin on the latest in a series of discussions on unification which have proceeded with fluctuating enthusiasm since 1955. But none of the participants hopes for much concrete progress from these talks about talks.

Two earlier schemes for re-union founded in the Church of England's General Synod, largely as a result of Anglo-Catholic fears that Anglican bishops would be devalued if

Methodists were recognised as their equals. The Methodists emerged as a separate denomination from the Church of England gradually and almost by accident towards the end of the 18th century, though their founder, John Wesley, remained an Anglican priest.

The organised Anglo-Catholic party in Synod has now been weakened by the ordination of Anglican women priests. The battle against women priests was led in Synod by the then Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, who, as Bishop of Truro, had led the fight against earlier schemes for

union with the Methodists. However, the Methodist Church, which had been the more enthusiastic suitor, seems to have lost some of the passion it once brought to the cause.

In common with the Roman Catholics, both churches have been losing members since the most serious unity discussions were under way: the Church of England, with 17,000 people on its electoral rolls, is now down to 70 per cent of its 1975 membership, and the Methodists, with 4,083,000 members, are at 73 per cent of the 1975 strength. But in both churches there is considerable enthusiasm for

informal co-operation at local level, especially in the countryside. The growth in such informal co-operation is probably the greatest success of the ecumenical movement, which is otherwise in retreat all around the world at the moment.

Hopes of reconciliation between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, which Anglican opponents of union with the Methodists would have preferred, have been blasted by the way in which the ordination of women exposed completely irreconcilable attitudes to authority between the churches.

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Burger King pays £106,000 to staff forced to 'clock off'

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

The fast-food chain Burger King has paid out £106,000 in compensation to staff employed on controversial "zero-hours" contracts.

The 900 employees, who received average back pay of £118 for the six months to September, had been made to stand around, unpaid, in the burger restaurants until business picked up.

One Glasgow student said that he had received £1 for a five-hour stint, and another employee in Cardiff claimed she was paid nothing after she had worked a shift.

The Labour Party, together with the unions, had campaigned for Burger King to pay compensation after it was revealed that staff were being told to clock off for unpaid breaks.

In a letter to Ian McCartney, the Labour employment spokesman, the company insisted that such scheduling did not constitute company policy and that the practice was not widespread. Mr McCartney has led the campaign against zero-hours contracts and says that a future Labour government would make them unlawful.

The letter to Mr McCartney, from Craig Bushey, managing director (Western Europe) of Burger King, said: "The back pay was calculated on the difference between the hours that employees were scheduled to work and those for which they received payment, irrespective of whether they volunteered to go home."

"Because it was not possible to identify those occasions where people stopped worked on a voluntary basis, we decided to compensate all staff who



Ian McCartney: 'Scrooge has backed down'

worked less hours than they had been scheduled," he wrote.

Mr Bushey pointed out that the number of employees who had received compensation was therefore larger than those who had been affected by the "misuse of rostering".

He expressed the hope that "the action taken by Burger King puts this issue to rest and demonstrates our commitment to equitable employment practices."

The practice of offering zero-hours contracts is increasingly widespread in the service sector, especially in hotels and restaurants. While it minimises labour costs for the employer, possibly at the expense of the employee, there is no law to prevent any employer using these arrangements.

Mr McCartney said the payout was a complete vindication of the party's campaign against such conditions of employment. He said that he had suspected that the practice was widespread because of the number of letters he had received.

John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, said that the Burger King case exposed the

myth that low pay was a problem only in small and struggling firms. "It shows that workers in large as well as small firms need the protection of a minimum wage," he said.

Owned by the Grand Metropolitan group, Burger King has told its managers that the practice of telling staff to clock off during quiet periods is not acceptable.

John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB general union, said: "We are delighted that the company have opened their wallets to recompense for their bad practice."

"We will be watching like hawks to wipe out this practice from British workplaces."

Mr McCartney, welcoming the payout, said: "Scrooge has backed down just in time for Christmas."



Christmas ritual: Mike Free, Mayor of Glastonbury, taking cuttings of the Holy Thorn at St John's yesterday to send to the Queen Photograph: Christopher Jones

Chinook crash inquiry told of test 'flame-out'

An RAF Chinook helicopter suffered an engine "flame-out" and computer malfunctions during trials only weeks before a similar aircraft crashed killing 29 people, a fatal-accident inquiry was told yesterday.

Further trials of the troubled aircraft had been suspended while the engine failure was investigated, but the RAF continued flying Chinooks on operations, the inquiry at Paisley Sheriff's Court was told.

The inquiry concerns a Chinook which was en route from Northern Ireland to the Scottish Highlands when it crashed on the southern tip of the Mull of Kintyre on 2 June last year, killing everyone on board.

Those who died were 10 members of the RUC special branch, nine Army intelligence officers, six M15 officers and the four-man RAF crew.

At yesterday's preliminary hearing, the allegations of the faults found in the trials on a Chinook Mark II helicopter were raised by Aidan O'Neill, a lawyer representing the widow of the crash pilot, Flt Lt Jonathan Tapper.

Flt Lt Tapper, 28, and his co-pilot, Flt Lt Richard Cook, 30,

were blamed by RAF chiefs for the accident.

Mr O'Neill said he had received a statement from a Colonel Hodgkiss, who worked at the MoD's Boscombe Down test facility. The colonel had said that on 7 March last year, during testing, there had been an incident in which a Chinook Mark II developed some type of "flame-out".

Trials of the aircraft were suspended while the engine failure was investigated. There were also several malfunctions of the machine's computer. Mr O'Neill said he would be grateful if the MoD could provide details of the incidents.

Siggi Bennet, for the MoD, claimed it was not the place to make such allegations. Earlier, the inquiry was told that the Chinook helicopter pilot had been accused of "gross negligence" and that the widows of the crewmen had been refused funding from the MoD for legal representation.

Around 50 witnesses are expected to give evidence to the inquiry, which is due to last four weeks.

Sir Stephen Young adjourned the hearing until 8 January.

DAILY POEM

Sorrows of the Moon

By Charles Baudelaire

*How lazily to-night the moon dreams above the land:
Like a ripe beauty on her cushioned couch,
Who before she slips to sleep allows her hand
Caress her breast, with slight and sensuous touch.*

*On the stained back of soft drifts of foam
Swooning, she reclines, as night flies by,
Lifting her eyes towards those shapes that roam
Like flowers, the floating terraces of the sky.*

*When sometimes the languid one less fall
On earth just one furtive tear, that's all,
A pious poet, disdainful of sleep's prize,*

*Will cradle that pale tear within his hand
With its reflecting irises like a diamond band
To treasure in his heart, far from the sun's eyes.*

In April 1855, 18 poems by Charles Baudelaire appeared in *Revue des Deux Mondes*. He called them *Les Fleurs du Mal*, or the *Flowers of Sickness*, and they caused a sensation for their frank images. When they were published in an extended version, Baudelaire was prosecuted for obscenity by the French Courts; the ban on some prohibited poems not being lifted until May 1949. Ulick O'Connor, the Irish biographer, poet and playwright, has translated the 18 poems, this amongst them, for the 140th anniversary of the first publication. *Poems of the Damned* are published by the Monarchline/Wolfhound Press (68 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1) at £5.99.

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news

PC 'raped 15-year-old girl high on solvent'

A police officer raped a 15-year-old solvent addict in the back of his patrol car after finding her "insensible" in an alley, a court was told yesterday.

Preston Crown Court was told that Constable Adam Grice-Roberts, 32, had been told to take the girl to hospital but had sex with her in the car in the police station garage at Blackpool, Lancashire.

The jury was told Grice-Roberts admits having sex with the girl but claimed she had persuaded him to do it. He has pleaded guilty to unlawful sexual intercourse but denies rape.

Guy Gozem, for the prosecution, said that the girl was "insensible" from inhaling gas, to which she was addicted. "She

was in no condition to decide whether to consent or not," he said. "The prosecution say this fact was obvious."

The rape is alleged to have happened on 18 April when a woman found the girl - "apparently in another world" - and called the police. Mr Gozem said there was no dispute Grice-Roberts put her in his car where she carried on inhaling gas and that he had taken her to Blackpool police station where a sergeant advised him to take her to hospital.

"He walked her back to his car in the police station garage and in the back of the car had sexual intercourse with her there and then. He then drove her to hospital."

The girl, who cannot be named, had been to her parents' home in Blackpool for the Easter weekend and was due to return to a children's home in North Wales where she lived.

After Grice-Roberts dropped her at the hospital, she caught a train out of the resort. She was put off the service at Preston because she was seen inhaling gas. She ran away from a police officer and later that day made two phone calls to Childline.

The girl told a policewoman in video interviews that Grice-Roberts had touched her indecently while she was in the alleyway, putting his hand down her pants and asking her if it felt good. Mr Gozem said the girl had said no. She said on the

video that the officer had let her carry on sniffing in the car, where he touched her again.

Mr Gozem said after they arrived at the police station they were sent away almost immediately by the sergeant. Grice-Roberts agreed that "there and then, almost immediately, he had sexual intercourse with her as she lay across the back seat of the car".

The girl claimed she was inhaling from a can as the officer had sex with her. Three empty cans were later found in the underground garage. The girl told police about her condition at the time: "I was really out of it."

Asked if she had told Grice-Roberts not to do it, she replied: "No, at the time I didn't even

know what was going on. I was high. I knew he was having sex, but I was high."

Mr Gozem said Grice-Roberts's account to police was that the girl had consented to intercourse and that in effect she had persuaded him to do it. He claimed she had talked about it and said she wanted it, and touched him on the way back to the car "to leave him in no doubt she wanted sex".

Mr Gozem said from the description of other witnesses "it must have been perfectly apparent this girl was in no position to consent to sex".

Two video-taped interviews with her would form her main evidence and she would then be cross-examined by videolink.

The jury of seven men and five women watched on television screens set up in the court as the girl described in a taped interview what she claimed had happened when Grice-Roberts found her. She said: "I can't remember much. I was face down. I got up and carried on sniffing. He kept asking me why I did it."

She said the officer, who was in uniform, had put his hand down her pants. "He asked me if it made me feel good," she said. "I said no. He said, 'Carry on finishing your can.' Then he took me back to the car. He carried on touching me."

She claimed that in the dimly lit underground car park at Blackpool police station he had then had intercourse with her.

"He did it. He had sex with me in the car," she said.

She then described how Grice-Roberts dropped her off at the Victoria hospital. She left without being treated after asking to use the toilet.

She went home, packed a bag to return to the children's home and caught a train for Preston, but ran off when she saw a policeman waiting at the station. She then phoned the children's helpline ChildLine and told them what had happened.

The girl said she had bought six cans of butane gas that day and had already sniffed three of them. She said: "I was high. I knew I was having sex but I was high. I am not lying."

The trial continues.



Grice-Roberts: Admits sex with girl in patrol car

Unlawful weapons: Headmaster's death and record level of stabbings prompt campaign to reduce violence

Police issue amnesty for knives to be dumped

JASON BENNETTO and DANNY PENMAN

A nationwide knife amnesty will be launched by police tomorrow in the aftermath of the stabbing to death of the school headmaster Philip Lawrence.

A record number of people were killed in knife incidents last year - more than five a week - providing evidence that a growing number of young men and teenagers carry "blades".

Police are concerned about the widespread availability of knives, which can be bought from DIY shops for as little as 50p, or specialist magazines and dealers in military weapons for more than £1,000. There is no age restriction on buying knives - in theory a three-year-old could go into a shop and purchase a Bowie knife with a 12-inch blade.

From tomorrow until 20 January, owners of knives will be able to surrender the weapons anonymously in special bins located in police stations throughout the 43 forces in England and Wales.

The concern about a growing knife culture in Britain was highlighted by the stabbing to death of Mr Lawrence on 8 December. His murder, outside his school in Maida Vale, north-west London, has prompted the police to launch the knife amnesty.

Last year 236 people - 165 of them men - were killed in England and Wales by a "sharp instrument", compared to 183 the previous year, Home Office figures reveal. In Scotland, 58 victims died in knife attacks, an increase of 14 from 1993.

The diversity of knives on sale has never been greater. Magazines such as *Combat & Militaria* and *Combat and Survival* carry

pages of adverts for weapons including throwing knives (£11.50), hunting knives (from £17), and double-edged commando knives (£19).

James Marchington, editor of *Combat & Militaria*, which this month carries a review of "Spanish Blades", said: "The knife-carrying culture needs to be attacked. There's an element who are prepared to carry knives and misuse them. While there are DIY and kitchen shops selling knives to anyone who wants them, passing laws is pretty useless."

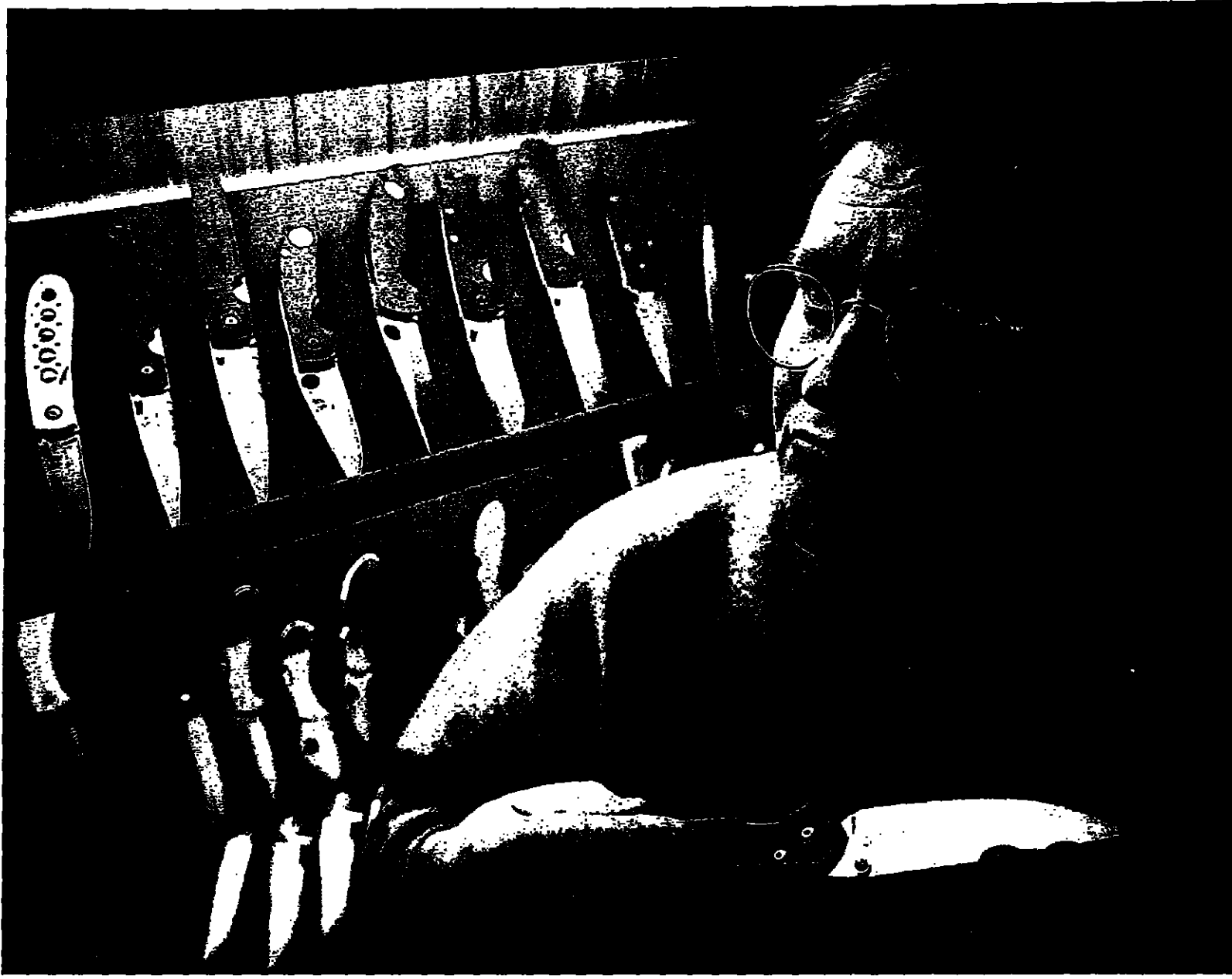
Frank Kay, owner of Framar Hammerli UK, in Blackburn, one of the largest suppliers of military and hunting style knives, said that teenagers were fascinated by the weapons he sold in his shop. "What little boys aren't interested in a Bowie or a throwing knife?"

He said he would never sell anything to someone aged under 17, although he admitted he had no control over goods sold via mail order. "It's the person that holds the knife that the laws should be dealing with, not the weapon," he said.

At the London Trading Place, in central London, customers can choose from a selection of several hundred knives costing from about £10. Top-quality "survival knives" with eight-inch blades, a serrated edge and a "skull-crushing" handle retail for £197.

Asked why people bought the combat knives, an attendant replied: "It's like, why drive a Jaguar rather than a Mini? These knives are Jaguars."

Alan Galer, manager of Burgess & Galer, which supplies the West End theatre trade with knives, said it would be almost impossible to legislate against the sale of knives capa-



Blade runner: Frank Kay with some of the specialty knives on sale at his shop in Blackburn, Lancashire

ble of killing because they also have many legitimate uses. "What's the difference between a chef's knife and a dagger? Many murders are committed with them as well."

"There's always been a problem with knives. We sell a lot of things that could be used as dangerous weapons but we are responsible. Sometimes we do get dodgy-looking people in here and we won't sell knives to them."

Police raids have uncovered a huge variety of weapons being held by teenagers. In London this has included bayonets,

flick knives, hunting knives, craft knives and ceremonial daggers as well as kitchen knives. In south-east London this has resulted in a police campaign aimed at schoolchildren, including one called Kids Against Knives.

However, the impression that schools are aware with knives is wrong, according to some criminologists. John Pitts, Professor of Applied Social Sciences at Brunel University, who recently completed a survey of two secondary schools, in east London and in Liverpool, said: "We are now fast ap-

proaching a Los Angeles-style gang situation."

However, he calculated that less than 5 per cent of the pupils in the London school carried knives, but none were reported in the Liverpool school. He said stabbings raised the fear of knife attacks, which in turn made the carrying of knives more likely for protection.

Jock Young, Professor of Criminology at Middlessex University, added: "It is really common for people including young women to carry knives now for self-defence. There's a macho culture growing up which re-

volves around violence but knives are carried by only a minority of people."

Two pubs are using metal detectors to scan customers for hidden knives because of fears of increased violence in public houses.

Bouncers are using handheld detectors during the weekends at the pubs in the city centre of Durham. The move follows an incident in which a doorman was wounded in a knife attack outside the Coach and Eight.

A spokesman for the pub said: "We brought it in after we started getting trouble. You read about stabbings and trouble in the area, particularly in Newcastle. This seems to be getting worse so we wanted to put a stop to it."

He said there had been no trouble with knives since the detectors were introduced.

Paul Martin, manager of the Fighting Cocks, said: "It seems to be working as we've only found a couple of pocket knives since we starting using the machines about three months ago. The customers all think it's a good idea."

Chemicals in food may lower fertility

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Low levels of common industrial chemicals found in a variety of packaging and food products affect the testes and sperm counts of rats, new research has shown.

The two British scientists who co-authored a report on the research, published this month in the American journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, were yesterday divided on its implications for human male fertility.

Professor John Sumpter, of Brunel University, in Uxbridge, thought the findings could be "extraordinarily significant" in unravelling why human male sperm counts have fallen dramatically in recent decades in the Western world.

But Dr Richard Sharpe, of the Medical Research Council's Reproductive Biology Unit in Edinburgh, played down the link. He issued a statement saying that humans are likely to be exposed to the chemicals at "considerably lower" levels than those used in the study.

The rats were exposed to two man-made chemicals, known as phthalates, which are known to mimic the female sex hormone oestrogen and which are now widely dispersed in the environment at low concentrations. The Edinburgh researchers found that baby male rats' testes were up to 13 per cent smaller and sperm counts up to 21 per cent lower as a result.

Phthalates are used to impart flexibility in plastics, including food wrappings, and have been found at concentrations above 10mg per kilogram in products as diverse as sandwiches, snacks, sausages, and butter.

Gwynne Lyons, a consultant to the World Wide Fund for Nature on artificial oestrogens, said the research should lead to "urgent action".

"There's not only a threat to human fertility," she said, "but to wild animal species as these substances build up in the wider environment."

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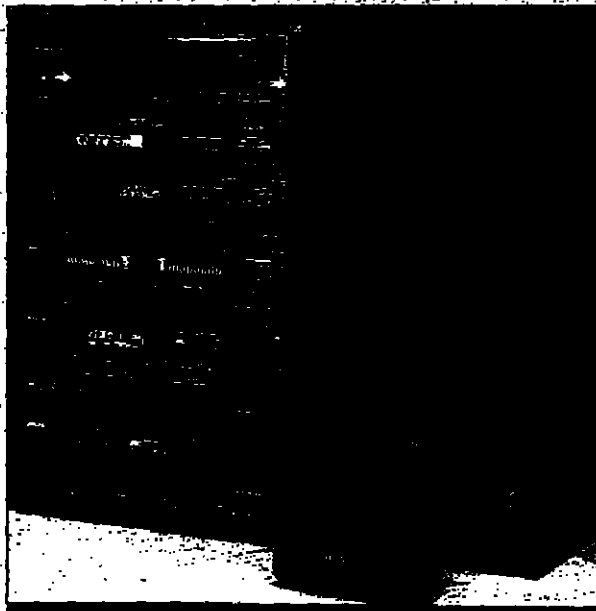
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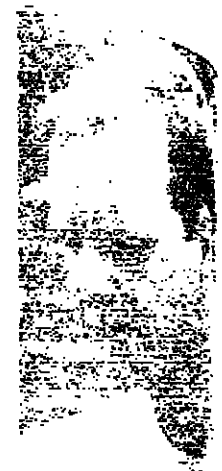
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Russian elections: Despite success of Communists, president has chance yet of winning a second term

Yeltsin still hopes to cling to power

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

As he pored over voting figures behind the walls of his country sanatorium, Boris Yeltsin yesterday must have longed for a celebratory nip of vodka.

True, they were no triumph, but Russia's parliamentary elections could have been much worse. Ill and unpopular he may be, but the President's chances of winning a second term are not dead yet.

Although the Communists emerged as the most popular party with an estimated 22 per cent of the party-based vote, their victory fell short of a fundamental shift in Russia's political terrain, despite the misery suffered by many millions on the path to economic reform.

Fears that Russians have de-

spaired of democracy altogether, and may soon elect another authoritarian leader, are so far still unfounded.

At the 1993 elections to the relatively powerless State Duma, the Communists had 13 per cent and the far-right Liberal Democratic Party had 22.9 per cent of the party-based vote.

The assembly huffed and puffed, but did little, as Mr Yeltsin ruled by decree. This time around the numbers have simply switched around.

The Kremlin clique, anxious not to be called to account over their shady privatisation deals, is likely to view the results as a sign that they may yet be able to use the ballot box to hang on to power. They will be particularly gleeful over the fate of the nationalist General

Alexander Lebed, whose Congress of Russian Communities fizzled out. The popular Afghan war hero may yet mount a strong presidential campaign, but he has not had the roar-away start that many expected.

The political battleground now switches to next year's presidential race. Mr Yeltsin's prospects look better than before: the pro-government vote, for Our Home is Russia, did not collapse (it stood at 9.6 per cent last night). And he has several cards up his sleeve.

For instance, he will probably reshuffle his Cabinet, kicking out his whipping-boy, the Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, who has won a seat as an MP. The International Monetary Fund is expected soon to grant another big loan to Russia, funds which will allow the

Kremlin to try to garner some votes by ploughing money into some of Russia's most severely neglected areas — the army, schools, power supplies. And he will be helped by the economy, which is out of its nosedive.

However, time is short. The first round of the presidential election is on 16 June, after which the two top candidates go to a run-off, unless one of them is an outright winner with more than 50 per cent (an unlikely scenario). The biggest danger facing Mr Yeltsin is that he will fail to make the second round, because the pro-reform vote is split, not least because of competition from the liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky, of Yabloko, which was running fourth yesterday.

If Mr Yeltsin (or, if he's too ill, possibly the Prime Minister,

Viktor Chernomyrdin) squeezes through, and faces a Communist candidate, he would have a chance of victory. Although well-organised, the Communists have yet to expand their nationwide base significantly beyond their elderly core followers. Mr Yeltsin, on the other hand, would harvest the vote of everyone who fears the shadow of the Soviet past.

For all its success, the Communist Party is also internally divided between unreconstructed Marxist-Leninists and "new" Communists who bear far more similarity to social democrats than to any of their flag-flourishing forefathers. And if Gennady Zyuganov, the party leader, is their presidential candidate (yesterday he fudged questions about it), he will have to raise his game considerably.

Although an impressive speaker, he still lacks sparkle.

If Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the flamboyant neo-fascist whose Liberal Democratic Party was running second last night, makes it to the second round against Mr Yeltsin, the President's chances would be better still. Many who enjoy Mr Zhirinovskiy's titillating escapades and wild anti-Western rhetoric may be happy to vote for him in parliament, but will have second thoughts when it comes to handing him the presidency.

But there is a nightmare scenario. What if no pro-reform candidates get through to the final round, and Russians are offered a choice, say, between a hard-line Communist candidate and Mr Zhirinovskiy? Time to dust off the history of the Weimar Republic.

Main parties' share of vote

Party	Share of vote
Communist Party	22.9%
Liberal Democratic Party	22.9%
Our Home is Russia	9.6%
Yabloko	9.6%
Other parties	34.0%

Gonzalez agrees to lead party in early poll

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid

Felipe Gonzalez agreed yesterday to lead his Socialist party into an early election next March, despite having said for months, indeed years, that he wanted to stand down. The Prime Minister bowed to the pressure of the party's federal executive to stand in his seventh election campaign, but the consensus was more resigned than enthusiastic, in recognition that no better candidate could be found.

Mr Gonzalez had been quickly preparing the ground for his Foreign Minister, Javier Solana, to succeed him, but that plan was scuppered when Mr Solana was appointed secretary-general of Nato earlier this month. It was then too late to find a convincing alternative, although only 10 days ago Mr Gonzalez wondered aloud if he had become, like Margaret Thatcher, more of a problem for his party than a solution.

Mr Gonzalez's name has become smeared with scandal, primarily because of a dirty war waged against ETA suspects in the 1980s. Two former ministers are up before the Supreme Court suspected of covert anti-terrorist actions in the early years of his rule. This has undoubtedly tarnished Mr Gonzalez's electoral appeal, but party leaders reckoned that the Socialist's prospects would nose-dive were he to cut and run so soon before an election.

The conservative opposition Popular Party is tipped to win in March, but possibly falling short of an overall majority. Its leader, Jose Maria Aznar, has failed to ignite public enthusiasm or to exploit fully the government's misfortunes.

Basking in the afterglow of a successful six-month EU presidency that ended at the weekend, Mr Gonzalez is likely to play the international card strongly. Critics say this is a ploy to divert attention from domestic woes, including a record 22.7 per cent unemployment.

His leadership has been undisputed since he became general secretary in 1974 when the party was still illegal. By 1979, his invincibility was such that when he stood down in protest at calling the party Marxist, the comrades dumped the Marxist tag rather than lose him. He fought elections in 1977 and 1979 and won in 1982, 1986, 1989 and 1993.

Mr Solana left Madrid last night for his new job in Brussels, and was replaced by his number two, Carlos Westendorp, the Minister for European Relations and a career diplomat.

Kremlin stands firm against the crimson tide

HELEN WOMACK
Moscow

The red tide rose on Russia's Pacific coast late on Sunday night but by the time it had washed across the country to lap against the walls of the Kremlin yesterday it had lost much of its power to terrify the occupant of the red-brick towers.

Preliminary results from the Far East, which is seven time zones away from the capital, showed the Communists and the ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy romping home in Sunday's parliamentary election. But the closer the count came to Moscow, the more reformers began to pick up votes, until it was clear President Boris Yeltsin would face a mixed assembly hardly more hostile to him than the outgoing Duma.

After two democratic parliamentary elections since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a pattern is beginning to emerge. In both cases the *glushinka*, or depths, in other words the seemingly endless Russian provinces, have voted in a conservative mood but balance has been restored by the big cities to the west, especially Moscow, which is an island of increasing prosperity in a sea of rural poverty.

In Russia the city limits more

or less mark the end of civilisation. As little as 100 miles from Moscow, many country people live in 19th-century conditions, taking their water from wells, cutting down trees for firewood. Inevitably they are envious of Muscovites and other city-dwellers who, while still struggling, are starting to enjoy the fruits of the free market.

Clearly the tiny minority of super-rich, cruising the streets of Moscow in their Western limousines, were going to vote to preserve their new lifestyles. But the nearly 20 per cent vote for the government party, Our Home is Russia, which topped the poll in the capital, suggested a far wider band of Muscovites already felt they had a stake in reforms. The liberal Yabloko grouping also did well, tying with the Communists for second place in Moscow.

Two hundred miles to the north-east, Yabloko, headed by the whizz-kid economist Grigory Yavlinsky, looked as if it had won in the historic city of Yaroslavl. It had also done well in St Petersburg, Russia's traditional "window on the West". The former imperial capital has developed trade links with neighbouring Finland and the shops there are well-stocked with Nordic products.

The big Communist vote came from the Far East where, for example, naval officers are



Rising in the east: The Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov commenting on the election results at a press conference yesterday

angry about the decline of the Pacific Fleet. Recently there were reports of naval conscripts actually dying of starvation there.

Support for the Communists also came from Siberia, including the mining region of Kemerovo, which once nearly brought down Mikhail Gor-

bachev with a strike over lack of soap in the pit-head baths and which has now punished Mr Yeltsin for not paying wages on time. And it came from the "red belt", the traditionally conservative farming region near the border with Ukraine.

In all these areas, Mr Zhirinovskiy's misleadingly named

Liberal Democratic Party was close behind the Communists, confounding pundits who had judged it a spent force.

The big surprise of the election was how badly the nationalist Congress of Russian Communities fared. But its charismatic leader, General Alexander Lebed, was safe, be-

cause half the seats in the assembly are reserved for constituency MPs and his local power-base of Tula did not let him down.

International observers congratulated Russia on having held fair elections. And, indeed, they probably were except in one pocket — Chechnya — where

voters were bribed with meat to go to the polls while separatists continued to resist the Russian military intervention. It came as little surprise when, in good old Soviet style, the single candidate for regional leader, Moscow's stooge, Dokh Zavgayev, was declared to have won 90 per cent of the vote.

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Austria's far right taken by surprise

There was no disguising the sense of disbelief among supporters of far right populist Jörg Haider as the results of Sunday's election showed that, for the first time since he became leader of the Austrian Freedom Party in 1986, his support had declined. Adrian Bridge writes.

The losses were not very great — its 22 per cent showing was just 0.5 per cent down on October 1994 — but for a man who has sought to surround himself with an air of invincibility, it was a serious setback. "For the first time a man who has defined himself as a perpetual winner has been seen to lose," said Anton Peinika, a professor of politics at Innsbruck University. "Maybe this is the beginning of the end."

Certainly that was the hope of Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, whose Social Democrats emerged the clear winners of the election after campaigning on an anti-Haider platform.

Mr Haider, 45, has never before lost support in an election, but he has had setbacks. In 1991, he had to step down as governor of the province of Carinthia after saying Hitler's employment policies were "orderly". In 1994 he unsuccessfully spearheaded the "no" campaign in Austria's referendum on European Union membership.

Sunday's election, which was held three years before it was due, was called after the Social Democrats and the conservative People's Party fell out over how to tackle Austria's growing budget deficit. However, both parties are expected to form a new coalition.

IN BRIEF

Budget stalemate lays off workers

Washington — Some 260,000 US government workers were temporarily laid off again as President Bill Clinton and the Republican-led Congress failed to end a budget impasse that has forced the second partial shutdown in a month. *Reuters*

Missing Russian airliner 'found'

Moscow — Search teams were virtually certain that wreckage found in the Russian Far East is that of a Tupolev airliner which disappeared 12 days ago with 97 people on board, officials said. Technicians were dropped at the site after the wreckage was spotted by helicopter, and were preparing the site for inspection by experts. *Reuters*

OJ and the 'right thing for justice'

New York — OJ Simpson delivered a videotaped greeting at a Los Angeles party for friends, attorneys and the jurors who acquitted him, telling them, "I hope to break bread with you soon," the New York Daily News reported. Simpson's chief defence lawyer, Johnnie Cochran, who gave the party, called jurors up on stage in a hotel ballroom and told them: "You did the right thing for justice." *AP*

Strikes cut France's growth rate

Paris — France's public sector strikes cost the economy around 30bn francs (£3.9bn) for just the first two weeks, according to the national statistics office, INSEE, leading it to cut its economic growth forecast for the fourth quarter of the year to 0.1 per cent, from between 0.4 and 0.5 per cent. For 1995, INSEE now sees a growth rate of 2.6 per cent, instead of its October forecast of 2.9 per cent and the 3.1 per cent it predicted in July. *Reuters*

Haiti front-runner ahead in poll

Port au Prince — Early indications from Haiti's presidential election were that the front-runner, René Prval of outgoing President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's Lavalas party, had won. Official results are not due until next week. *Reuters*

Eritrea seizes Red Sea island

Sanaa — Yemen said Eritrea had seized Greater Hanish island in the Red Sea, despite announcing it had accepted a ceasefire to halt fighting over the island and its sister, Lesser Hanish. Fighting flared on Friday, with a Yemeni source saying nine soldiers from Eritrea's foreign ministry said its forces shot down a Yemeni helicopter. *Reuters*

French vet fined for sacking HIV aide

Paris — In a landmark ruling hailed by Aids activists, Patrice Loeffler, a French veterinarian, has received a five-month suspended prison term and a 20,000 franc fine for firing his assistant, Frederic Bonhomme, who is HIV-positive. *AP*

Baby kept out of the picture

Wellington — A nine-day-old baby was refused entry when his mother tried to take him into an exhibition of erotic photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe at Wellington City Art Gallery. *AP*

Biblical relics: Archaeologists optimistic as they start dig for more fragments of documents near 2,000-year-old ruin



Sands of time: Diggers remove debris from a cave where archaeologists hope to find more fragments of the Dead Sea scrolls. Photograph: AP

Dead Sea scroll search reopens

PATRICK COCKBURN
Qumran

In a deep ravine beside the ruins of the 2,000-year-old settlement of Qumran, Israeli archaeologists yesterday started excavating three caves in the hope of finding more fragments of the Dead Sea scrolls. It is the first significant dig at the site since 1956 when the last of 11 caves containing ancient biblical and non-biblical documents was discovered by a Bedouin who saw a bat fly into a crevice in a cliff face.

"I saw there were very many trails," says Hanan Eshel, an archaeologist from the Bar-Ilan university near Tel Aviv, who first realised the significance of the caves in 1993. He points to narrow but distinct paths through the stony marl which makes up the sides of the ravine. "I thought it impossible that nobody had checked what they were, but I brought in a zoologist who said the trails were made by man and not by animals."

The paths lead to the entrances of a dozen caves, three of which are now being excavated. In preliminary digging by the Israeli Antiquities Department a 1st-century Roman coin

and some Roman pottery shards were found. Magen Broshi, formerly curator in charge of the Dead Sea scrolls at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, who, together with Dr Eshel, is leading the dig, says that professional archaeologists had previously neglected the site as unpromising.

He says, however, that archaeologists have a poor record in finding caves at Qumran, the home of a Jewish sect, most probably the Essenes, who transcribed or stored the scrolls between about 150 BC and 68 AD when their centre was destroyed by the Romans. He says that at first archaeologists believed that only caves in the steep rock wall which rises behind Qumran contained scrolls, but in 1952 a Bedouin sitting around a camp fire were told by an old man that he had seen a partridge entering a cave. When they looked it contained 15,000 fragments of scrolls.

The Bedouin find, now known as Cave Four, is 200 yards from the present excavation on the same narrow plateau on which the Essenes built their communal home overlooking the Dead Sea. Dr Broshi says that the trails are significant because "if you make

a trail in the desert it stays there for thousands of years". Dr Eshel says that he and his team will dig for 14 days and then assess what they have discovered before returning to the excavation in February.

The first Dead Sea scrolls were found by a Bedouin shepherd boy named Mohammed edh-Dhib in 1947, when he was looking for a straying animal. He saw a hole in a cliff into which he threw a stone which made a strange sound.

When he climbed into the cave the next day he found big terracotta jars with lids containing scrolls wrapped in linen. Another 10 caves containing documents were found over the next nine years in what the American archaeologist W F Albright called "the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times".

The scrolls in the first cave were carefully stored, but other fragments appear to have been hastily dumped in caves just before Qumran was destroyed by the Romans on their way to besiege Jerusalem. The members of the sect, although they had an elaborate water supply system and communal rooms at Qumran, largely lived in caves themselves.

PLO to try top Nablus gunman

Jerusalem — Ahmed Tabouq, the gunman whose militia has ruled the Old City of Nablus for six months, is expected to stand trial in Jericho in the next three days, writes Patrick Cockburn. He was arrested after a 10-hour siege of his house and will face charges of resisting the authority of the self-rule administration, which took control of Nablus from Israel last week, said Palestinian sources.

Mr Tabouq, 30, the leader of the so-called Fatah Hawks, was cornered after Palestinian police, who are really combat troops, sealed off the medieval Old City at the weekend. At one moment he was seen on his roof top armed with an M16 assault rifle and accompanied by three of his men holding pistols and grenades.

A Palestinian officer shouted: "Surrender yourself and your weapons. We do not intend to harm you." Mr Tabouq is said to have fired back and jumped on to another roof before disappearing into the tangle of old streets. Police cordoned off his house — he has a wife and three children — until he surrendered. Mr Tabouq was taken to Jericho because his detention in

Nablus might face resistance. He told the *Independent* in an interview in the Old City or *cashbah* two weeks ago that "we consider ourselves soldiers of the Palestinian Authority".

A thin man with a gaunt face and a chain-smoker of cigarettes, Mr Tabouq was a leader of the Palestinian *intifada* in Nablus who was released from jail two years ago. After quarrelling with the local Fatah leader appointed by Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO, earlier this year, he set up the Fatah Hawks as a vigilantes.

His reputation in Nablus was mixed. To Said Kana'an, director of the Palestinian Research and Studies, he was a kidnapper who extracted protection money from local shopkeepers by threats and knee-capped anybody who resisted him. To others he was closer to Robin Hood than Al Capone.

The move against Mr Tabouq came after local businessmen protested about him to Mr Arafat when he visited the city last Friday. His power depended on the vacuum as the Israelis prepared to leave and the Palestinian Authority moved to take control.

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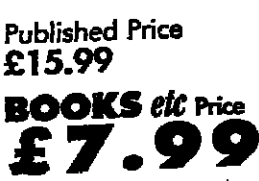


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Save the Children is focusing on children who have been separated from their families, counselling and reuniting them; the Red Cross is running the largest humanitarian operation in the region, looking after refugee camps and linking people through its messaging network; War Child plans to build a £2.5m music therapy centre in Mostar, and to send urgently needed prosthetics to wounded children in the Tuzla area. Child



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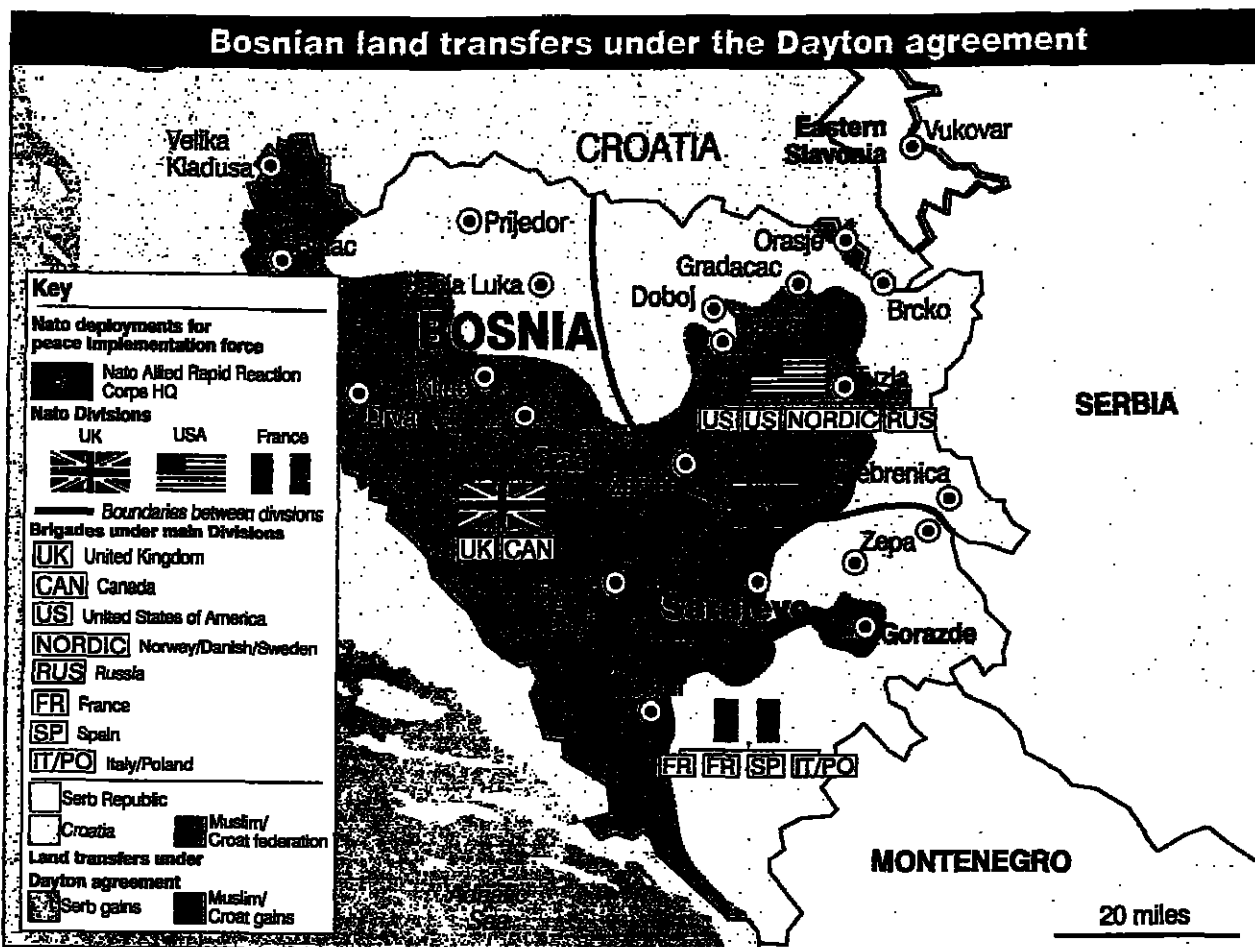
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Nato warns factions to stand by peace deal

EMMA DALY
Tuzla
MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

The winter-long pall of fog shrouding the city of Tuzla yesterday lifted long enough for the long-awaited US deployment to begin in earnest, 48 hours before Nato takes over command in Bosnia from the United Nations. By early evening, 16 cargo planes had landed at Tuzla air base, the latest carrying 120 paratroopers from the 325th Airborne, marching off with Stars and Stripes flying. 700 more are expected to arrive in the next couple of days to guard the base.

The first planes seemed to be carrying more camera crews and military PR men than combat units. Still, the US army heaved a sigh of relief that, after five days of cancelled flights, the runway was visible to incoming pilots. The first to touch down laughed in disbelief at the huge press pack freezing in a light drizzle to record the historic moment. One of the first loads was a large consignment of bottled water and a group of British troops. But by evening there was no sign of the Russian contingent rumoured to be en route for Tuzla, where they will work under US command.

The US schedule, said Brigadier-General Stan Cherrie of the 1st Armoured Division, was "a little bit behind - no problem". The transfer of authority from the UN to Nato would go ahead tomorrow at noon, he added. But he could give no starting date for the US deployment beyond the Tuzla air base: US troops have reached the Sava river border with Croatia, north of Tuzla, and are preparing to build a bridge for combat units. Gen Cherrie sat in on a UN meeting yesterday with commanders from all three warring factions, and won permission for a final reconnaissance trip to examine the road south from Croatia.

All three parties, he said, were "very, very responsive" and "genuinely agreeable" - an assessment shared by Brigadier Richard Dannatt, a senior British UN officer who will switch his blue beret for Nato green tomorrow. "I'm cautiously optimistic this can work," he said in Gornji Vakuf, the town shattered in the Muslim-Croat war that will serve as headquarters for the British Nato sector in western Bosnia.

The brigadier emphasised the Bosnian Serbs' "co-opera-

tive" attitude - the British sector includes Banja Luka and the towns of Mirkonje Grad and Sipovo, which are to revert to Serb control. "They realised the time had come to talk sensibly, to talk peace." None the less, the brigadier explained to commanders that Nato would not submit to the harassment imposed on the UN.

The peace plan, he said, had been signed by each army's leaders and it was their job to comply with its provisions. If not, there was "no doubt whatsoever" that Nato would use the overwhelming force - including artillery and air power - at its disposal. "But I detect that it will not be necessary."

His greatest concern is the heavy snow forecast for tomorrow: the British deployment, which includes 3,000 British UN peace-keepers already in place and 10,000 fresh troops, has continued unscathed so far. But he warned:



Over there: LTC Frank Bohle, US commander, arriving in Sarajevo

"I think the weather probably is the biggest problem."

France will be responsible for the south-eastern sector of Bosnia, which includes the continuing and potential trouble spots of Sarajevo, the Muslim enclave of Gorazde, and the divided city of Mostar. It will also have a small logistics contingent in the Croatian port of Ploce.

France's principle of sending only volunteers on active duty abroad will be maintained. More than 50 French soldiers have been killed in Bosnia, and more than 600 wounded since the beginning of French involvement in 1991. By the time the redeployments are complete, France will have a total of 7,500 men on the ground.

There will also be 1,200 Spanish troops, 2,100 Italians, and around 1,000 Portuguese under French command. A Ukrainian group could also be assigned to the French zone.

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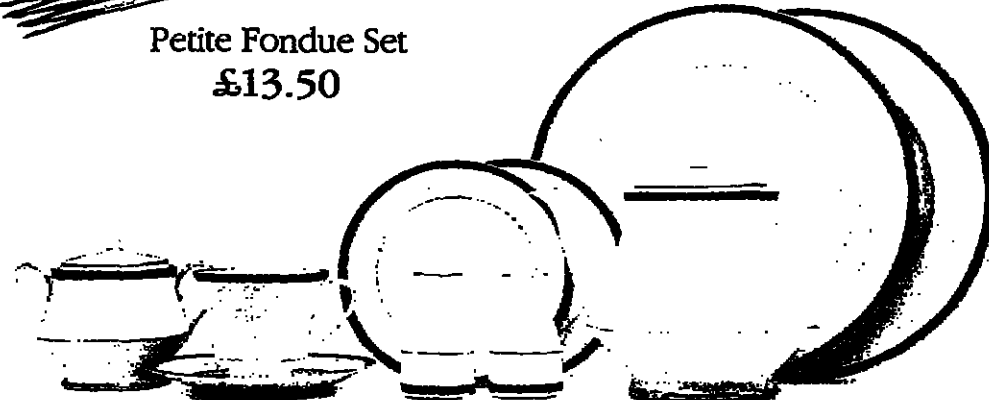
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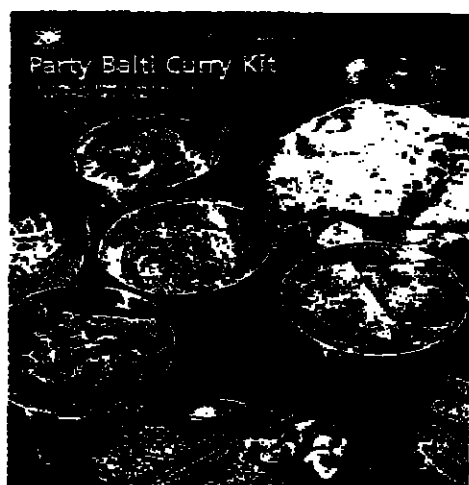
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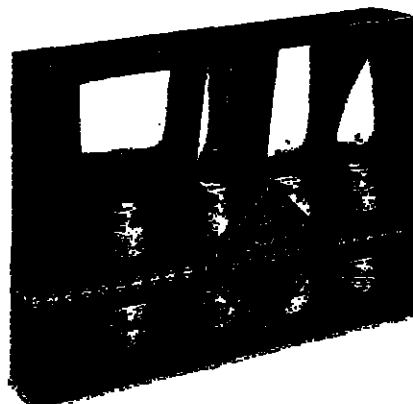
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Two Koreas: In Seoul, an ex-leader is accused of taking \$32m bribes; in the North, floods bring starvation

Prisoner 1437 is a former president

PAUL SHIN
Associated Press

Seoul — Dressed in the white uniform of a common prisoner, the disgraced former President Roh Tae-woo went on trial yesterday and repeated his claim that he only received donations from businessmen, not bribes.

The 63-year-old former general looked tense as he softly answered 200 questions from prosecutors over nearly six hours. Wearing rubber shoes and padded winter clothes

with prison number 1437 on his chest, Mr Roh sat still on a wooden bench and gazed straight at the three-judge panel seated on a raised podium.

Asked if he received money from 35 business groups, he said: "Yes, but I can't remember exactly where, when and from whom. When I privately met them, I thought this was the practice."

Under pressure from the prosecution, however, Mr Roh admitted that he had received \$32m (\$21m) from the nation's largest conglomerate, Samsung,

He said he destroyed all accounting records after the scandal became public in October — a crime under Korean law.

The presiding judge, Kim Young-il, repeatedly ordered Mr Roh to speak up, but he did not comply. Even reporters seated several benches away could not hear clearly.

The next hearing is set for 15 January. Also standing trial are 14 aides and businessmen, charged with helping him set up the slush fund. The only other defendant under arrest for the trial was Mr Roh's former chief

bodyguard, Lee Hyun-woo. The rest were indicted without being arrested.

The industrialists represent a *Who's Who* of South Korean business circles, including Samsung's Chairman Lee Kun-hee and Kim Woo-joong, head of the conglomerate Daewoo.

The businessmen denied they bribed Mr Roh, saying the money they gave him was meant to hedge against possible disadvantage in doing business with the government.

Hundreds of people queued

overnight for the 80 seats available for the public. Many were touts, and the going rate for their tickets was \$300.

Television networks gave live reports of Mr Roh's 25-minute trip from jail to the court.

About 500 people surrounded the huge television screen at Seoul Express Bus Terminal.

Security was extremely tight, with 1,000 police standing guard inside and outside the court house.

Mr Roh, president from 1988

into a \$650m slush fund he amassed during his term. If convicted, he could be sentenced to 10 years to life in prison.

Before he was arrested on 15 November, Mr Roh claimed that collecting money from businesses was a long-standing practice of past governments and denied he took bribes.

Mr Roh's immediate predecessor, Chun Doo-hwan, is also in jail for masterminding a coup in 1979. The prosecution has until Friday to indict him for military rebellion, which carries

the death penalty, although that would be unlikely to be imposed. He has been on a hunger strike since his arrest on 3 December.

The trial comes as President Kim Young-sam is struggling to minimise the impact of scandals involving his two predecessors. He sacked his prime minister last Friday and appointed Lee Soo-sung, an academic with no ties to past governments.

The National Assembly yesterday gave its approval, setting the stage for an extensive government reorganisation.

Keating accused of pact with 'the devil'

ROBERT MILLIKEN
Sydney

The Australian government came under fire from human rights activists and East Timor supporters yesterday after signing a treaty with Indonesia to strengthen defence ties.

The treaty, the first of its kind between the two neighbours, could raise the possibility of each coming to the other's aid in the event of an attack. But even before Paul Keating, the Prime Minister, and President Suharto of Indonesia shook hands at the treaty's signing in Jakarta, the deal was attacked in Australia.

The focus of unease was Jakarta's human rights record in East Timor, where an estimated 100,000 people have died since Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony 20 years ago. José Ramos Horta, a spokesman for East Timor's main independence movement, and a long-time critic of Canberra's policy of strengthening its strategic links with Jakarta, said: "When you have a dictatorship and a democratic country with very different legal systems — one almost non-existent in Indonesia because the army is a law unto itself — to sign such a treaty is like a treaty between God and the devil."

The signing came within days of a visit to Indonesia by José Ayala Lasso, the UN Commissioner for Human Rights, who reported that there were "very grave" human rights violations in East Timor.

Mr Keating denied the treaty would compromise Australia in dealings with Indonesia over human rights, and has hailed the treaty, stitched together after 18 months of secret negotiations, as a triumph for Australia's campaign to consolidate its strategic role in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia and Indonesia will consult on security issues.

Critics allege that Australia has turned a blind eye on violations in a territory which is physically closer to Australia than to Jakarta. Australia is the only western country that recognises Indonesia's claim to sovereignty over East Timor. The UN recognises Portuguese jurisdiction.

Red Cross steps in to devastated North Korea

TERESA POOLE
Peking

"We hope the Government would provide some food for us but throughout the country we know the food situation is serious and there could be some difficulties before the next harvest. So I hope the Red Cross will continue to send this food," said Chu Jong-choi, straight to the camera, with a barren landscape behind him.

Other video pictures showed the remains of a collapsed dam, acres of destroyed paddy fields, and rice aid being distributed to hungry, cold farmers. It was the sort of footage that one might expect to be made available by any country suffering its worst floods this century. Except that this was North Korea.

In the world's most secretive totalitarian regime, the government does not usually beg for international help, let alone allow film footage to be taken in some of its most impoverished areas. But Pyongyang's appeal for international assistance in September, after the

devastating floods, is providing first hand evidence of poverty and hardship in a country whose official creed is self-reliance.

The latest pictures were obtained by the International Red Cross, which is providing emergency food and shelter. Dr Piero Calvi Parisetti, the federation's head of delegation in North Korea, has been in the country since October, travelling to rural areas normally closed to foreigners. "It is so extensive, the flood damage. We visited quite a number of places and everywhere we went we saw massive destruction," he said yesterday in Peking. As well as the stricken northern provinces, the Red Cross found areas south of Pyongyang left devastated by the receding waters.

It is estimated that 500,000 people lost their homes, grain stores and belongings in the August floods. Even before that disaster, North Korea was already suffering from years of poor harvests. "Now it is clear that aid will be needed for much longer — almost certainly until the next rice harvest in the



Helping hand: Villagers in Taziri, North Korea, fetch their grain ration supplied by the Red Cross

Photograph: Red Cross

fall of 1996," said Dr Calvi Parisetti. The immediate threat is the winter, when temperatures in the north of the country can fall to minus 20C.

It is not only the flood areas which are in need. A Chinese

visitor recently returned from North Korea confirmed that, even in the cities, the situation is bleak. "There is no meat in the market, no fruit, and scarce vegetables. People eat rice and cold pickled vegetables at home.

They have to buy things with [ration] coupons. People in the north dress poorly. No fat people can be found on the streets."

The problem for the Red Cross and the UN World Food Programme has been the reluctance of international donors to

give humanitarian aid to North Korea. The Red Cross is targeting 130,000 severely affected people, but its appeal in September for \$4.4m (£2.9m) has so far raised only \$3m. The UN

appeal has fared even worse.

The impact of the food shortages on the North Korean government remains unclear, but at the very least the crisis has forced Pyongyang to open its borders to prying Western eyes.

US-India relations sink to a new low

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

Relations between the newly Westernised India and the United States, which it has been courting since the demise of its old ally, the Soviet Union, have reached a new low.

The Indian home minister, SB Chavan, accused the US of having "evil designs" on Kashmir, where Indian security forces are trying to quell a five-year uprising by Muslim separatists. Then, last week, Washington leaked intelligence reports that claimed India was planning a secret atomic test in the deserts of Rajasthan.

An Indian foreign ministry spokesman denounced as "highly speculative" the allegations, which first surfaced last week in the *New York Times*.

The fact that India responded with less than a resounding "no" to these charges has concerned some Western diplomats. Citing intelligence experts, the paper claimed that US spy satellites had spotted unusually high levels of activity around India's nuclear test site at Pokhran.

"These were regular army exercises taking place near the Pokhran plant," a foreign ministry spokesman in New Delhi said. US intelligence experts

quoted by the *New York Times* claimed that India was either preparing to test a second nuclear bomb — a first device was exploded in 1974 at the desert site — or was fine-tuning its bomb-making procedures.

In New Delhi, officials accused Washington of using the spy photos as a ploy to pressure India into signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by next autumn, to tie in with President Clinton's bid for re-election. India has refused to join the ban, which goes into effect in late 1996, insisting that it would leave the US, Russia, China, France and Britain with an edge in nuclear know-how.

Western diplomats in New Delhi are worried that a second test may spur Pakistan into speeding up its own secret nuclear weapons programme. A Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman said on Sunday that any nuclear test by India would "jeopardise peace and stability in the region".

No date for India's planned nuclear blast was mentioned by the Washington intelligence sources, who told the *New York Times*: "If the Indians' motive is to get scientific knowledge, it might be months or years before they do the test."

"If it's for political reasons, it could be this weekend."

A bridge too far for commuters caught in the spell of the snake

In India, the snake is considered sacred, so when two cobras — one a six-footer — glided over to the Nizamuddin bridge the other day, nobody had the nerve to kill them.

Even without a pair of cobras lolling in the fast lane, Nizamuddin bridge is an awful place to be in the morning. The bridge connects Delhi with the ugly, concrete-grey satellite towns on the other side of the Yamuna river, and the morning rush is unbelievable. You find yourself straining in a mad race with buses, bullock carts, autorickshaws, motor-scooters, and even the odd camel. But the two cobras brought the traffic to a mesmerising halt.

A few of the braver scooter-riders were able to zig-zag past the two snakes on the road, but most of the motorists didn't want to try. The pile-up on the bridge soon trailed back for more than a mile. Even the blissing of a thousand car horns didn't budge the cobras, which had come up from the damp mustard fields beside the river and were happily sunning themselves on the warm asphalt.

Some commuters wanted the snakes to be whacked to death. What a nuisance, they said. Here was India speeding towards modernity and vying for acceptability as a 21st-century economic power and yet its brainy young executives couldn't get to their hi-tech

offices because of two snakes. It is one thing to decide to kill a cobra, another to do it. Those who recommended death for the serpents were shouted down by others, far more numerous. They argued that since the cobra was a mythological protector of Lord Shiva, it might not be a good idea to risk Shiva's wrath (he was, after all, the Great Destroyer) just to be on time for work.

A policeman was fetched by the crowd, but he thought it best to consult his superior who, in turn, thought it best to consult his superiors. This woeful lack of initiative led one diarist, from the *Sunday Observer* to recall the old Indian anecdote of the railway policeman who sent the following telegram to his chief: "Tiger On Platform Eating Station Master Stop Please Advise Stop Urgent Stop."

Many of the crowd on the Nizamuddin bridge also had memories of another strange cobra tale. The story has passed from fact into folklore, but the details, as I heard it, are as follows: Three years ago, on the road between Meerut and Delhi, a lorry driver who was carrying a load of spinach — the nature of his cargo matters to the chronicler, as you'll see — had

the bad luck to run over and kill a cobra. The driver did not stop. That evening, at the local police station, a crazed woman appeared to report the murder of her husband, killed by a hit-and-run lorry. "Name?" asked the weary officer.

When the woman replied that her husband had no name because he was a cobra, the police officer chased the old hag from the station. You can probably guess what happened next: the perfectly robust policeman is found mysteriously dead in his bed the next morning. But the story doesn't quite end there.

When news of the cobra-woman's revenge reached Delhi, as it did within hours, the workers who were unloading the spinach deliveries swore they noticed white, snake-like markings on every leaf. The bazaar talk was that the cobra "wife" had put a curse on all the spinach going to Delhi. Soon, spinach hysteria swept Delhi. An entire girls' school fell ill from eating spinach. For three or four days after that, I could not find spinach in the market.

So cobras, around Delhi, anyway, have acquired a rather vengeful reputation. Back on the Nizamuddin bridge, the traffic had become a congealed



Snaking along: the source of Delhi's congestion

river of iron, with scooters and rickshaws wedging into the tiniest open space, and when their drivers could move no further, they would beat their horns incessantly.

Finally, a young man came along. Fluid as a fine batsman, he casually lifted the cobras on a long stick and flicked them into the air. The snakes flew, writhing and landed in a nearby field. Sometimes I'm asked why I like living in New Delhi better than London: being late for work because of cobras on the bridge is a much better excuse than wet leaves on a British Rail line.

Tim McGirk

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David Marshall

As a teenager in the British colony in the early 1920s, David Marshall was incredulous when the family's soothsayer predicted he would one day be "the most important man in Singapore". After Marshall won the election of April 1955 and became Singapore's first Chief Minister, the fortune-teller was quick to remind him of the prophecy. "But you won't be the most important man in Singapore for long," he warned.

Fourteen turbulent months later Marshall was forced to resign, dejected and an apparent failure. But, despite the violence and disorder, Marshall's government achieved solid victories in tackling the thorny problems of education, localisation of the public service, and citizenship. Marshall himself went on to be acknowledged as a Grand Old Man.

Born in Singapore in 1908, David Saul Marshall - the name was only anglicised to Marshall several years later - was the eldest son of orthodox Jewish parents, recent immigrants from Baghdad. The young David had his first taste of wartime internment at the age of six, when his mother took the children back to Baghdad on holiday in 1914 and the Turks put the family under house arrest for three years.

Marshall's ambition to win the coveted Queen's Scholarship to study in Britain was dashed when overwork in his last year at school led to his physical collapse with tuberculosis. In 1925 he was sent to a Swiss sanatorium, where he put his time to good use by learning French, which stood him in good stead in later life.

Returning to Singapore, Marshall took up a variety of dead-end jobs to finance his further education. He finally arrived in London in 1934 at the age of 26, qualified as a lawyer in record time and was back in Singapore in 1937, starting to build his professional reputation. When the Second World War broke out, he enrolled in the Volunteers and was taken prisoner at the fall of Singapore



Marshall representing Singapore as Chief Minister in London, May 1956. He resigned the next month

in February 1942. His second incarceration was suffered in brutal conditions of cold, starvation and maltreatment in the coal mines of Hokkaido, from which he emerged barely alive.

Despite a long-standing dislike of colonialism and racial discrimination, Marshall took no formal part in the initial flurry of politics in post-war Singapore but enjoyed the social whirl as a debonair bachelor, while meticulous preparation combined with dramatic courtroom oratory soon established him as Malaysia's foremost criminal defence lawyer. But he was caught up in the political ferment leading up to the election of Singapore's first mainly elected government. Despite being a tireless politician, Marshall agreed to head the newly formed Labour Front, and in October 1954 he published an impassioned personal manifesto, "I Believe", calling for immediate self-government.

A fiery election campaign left Marshall astonished to find himself Chief Minister in April 1955, heading a precarious minority government. Relations with the stiff local colonial establishment were stormy. Singapore suffered from a spate of violent strikes and riots among labour unions and Chinese schools, and within four months Marshall precipitated a constitutional crisis, leading the local and international press to paint

him as emotional and unpredictable. But, sporting a bush jacket even at the most ceremonial occasions and holding weekly meet-the-people sessions, he brought warmth, sincerity and informality to the office of Chief Minister.

He also inspired grudging respect in the Colonial Office. Marshall staked his office on obtaining a promise of independence by April 1957, but constitutional talks held in London in April-May 1956 floundered when the British government insisted on keeping control of internal as well as external defence. Marshall remained inflexible, despite concessions from the British side and deep divisions within his own all-party delegation. Returning to Singapore, dejected and angry, he resigned as Chief Minister in June 1956, later withdrawing from the Labour Front and the Assembly itself.

Marshall's subsequent political career was unsuccessful and frequently incoherent. In 1957 he founded the Workers Party, but failed to win a seat in the 1959 general election, which swept Lee Kuan Yew's People's Action Party (PAP) to power. In July 1961 Marshall won a spectacular by-election as the dupe of the Communists, who supported him against the PAP for their own ends, but, standing as an independent at the general election two years later, he

failed ignominiously, forfeiting his deposit. His formal career as a politician petered out at the 1972 general election, when he was confined to hospital and could not comply with the rule to present his election papers in person. That same year Marshall was mortified when he was suspended from the Bar for six months on charges of leaking affidavits for publication in a politically sensitive case.

Meanwhile, in 1961, Marshall had married Jean Gray, an Englishwoman, at that time a lecturer in Social Work at Singapore University and a former Red Cross social worker during the Malayan Emergency, who shared his interest in Singapore politics and took an active part in charity work. Marshall took pleasure in his growing family, and the convivial Sunday gatherings at their seaside home at Changi were the centre of political talk. But this was not enough for Marshall, who became more restless still after he was forced to move from his home to make room for the new international airport.

Marshall was astonished and delighted when in May 1978, at the age of 70, the PAP government invited him to become Singapore's ambassador in Paris, and for the next 15 years he represented the republic's interests faithfully and with enthusiasm. Returning to Singapore in 1993, at the age of 85, he was still not

ready to retire, despite failing health and eyesight, and resumed practice with one of the republic's leading law firms. Ironically, during his 15 years' absence, a new English-educated, affluent, middle-class generation of Singaporeans had grown up, with whom Marshall was more in tune than with the Chinese-educated masses of his political prime. They welcomed his outspoken criticisms in television and newspaper interviews and public lectures. His age, his proven loyalty to Singapore and distinguished ambassadorial service gave him an authority which no other critics of government enjoyed.

Marshall's great strength was his firm belief in constitutional democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. He readily admitted himself he was no politician, lacking guile and bored with party organisation. Nor did he appreciate the nature of Singapore society.

While he was an egalitarian, a humanitarian full of compassion, a champion of the underdog, he did not understand or seek the company of ordinary working people and was much more at ease with the intellectualism of the elite. While he admired modern Singapore's achievements, he pleaded for more open political debate, a more independent-minded press, a more caring society and a kinder judicial system, free from emergency laws or capital punishment.

With his shock of white hair, his bushy eyebrows and protruding eyes, to the end Marshall exuded vitality, humour and a zest for living. "I see life as a miracle of joy. I don't want to go," he declared in his last months, and he waged his final battle against cancer with characteristic determination.

C. Mary Turnbull

David Saul Marshall (David Marshall), lawyer, diplomat, born Singapore 12 March 1908; Chief Minister of Singapore 1955-56; married 1961 Jean Gray (one son, three daughters); died Singapore 12 December 1995.



Another studio favourite: Blaine out to ensnare a millionaire in *Three Little Girls in Blue*, 1946

Vivian Blaine

A fine singer with an acerbic sense of humour rarely given full reign by Hollywood, the red-headed Vivian Blaine starred in several musical films of the Forties including *Rodgers and Hammerstein's State Fair* before finding greatest fame when she made her Broadway debut as Adelaide, the "perennial fiancée" of the classic musical *Gypsy* and *Dolls*.

Born Vivian Stapleton in Newark, New Jersey, in 1921, she started her career as a band singer with Art Kassel (and his "Kassels in the Air"). Given a contract by 20th Century-Fox in 1942, she played four minor roles before being launched as their new singing discovery in *Interbugs* (1943), starring Laurel and Hardy. Publicised as "the Cherry Blonde", she was then given the romantic lead in two Technicolor musicals, *Greenwich Village* and *Something for the Boys* (both 1944), but they were second-league fare. The former had a mediocre score (though Blaine warbled the standard "Whispering" prettily), while *Something for the Boys*, from Cole Porter's Broadway musical, kept only Porter's title-song and a fanciful plot strand involving a tooth filling which picked up radio broadcasts.

Her next film, *Nob Hill* (1945), entertainingly reworked one of the studio's favourite story-lines - a Barbary Coast saloon-owner falls for a society beauty and ruinously tries to move out of his class. Blaine was effective as the faithful singer waiting in the wings, and introduced two popular Jimmy McHugh/Harold Adamson ballads, "I Don't Care Who Knows It" and "I Walked In (With My Eyes Wide Open)".

The enormously successful *State Fair* (1945) followed, with Blaine as the midway performer who leaves the farm-boy Dick Haymes sadder but wiser. The score included three big hits and Blaine introduced one of them, "That's For Me", though her studio, alas, had a policy which forbade its stars from making recordings.

Blaine's *Doll Face* (1945) was a lower-budget affair in black-and-white, a sign that Fox was losing interest. Betty Grable was still their reigning musical star, the response to Blaine's first two major musicals had been disappointing, and she lacked the sweet ingenueness of other rising contract stars such as Jeanne Crain and June Haver. Haver was top-billed in *Three Little Girls in Blue* (1946), the story (another studio favourite) of three girls who masquerade as an heiress, her secretary and maid in order to ensnare a millionaire. Blaine introduced a lovely Josep Myrow/Mack Gordon ballad, "Somewhere in the Night", in an exquisitely orchestrated and filmed sequence.

If *I'm Lucky* (1946), a pleasant low-budget musical political satire co-starring Carmen Miranda (also about to leave the studio) and Perry Como, was Blaine's last Fox film, but four years later she was to have the biggest triumph of her career when *Gypsy* and *Dolls* opened on Broadway. The show was immediately recognised as a masterpiece, and Blaine's sympathetically droll performance as the adonoid showgirl, engaged for 14 years to the gambler Nathan Detroit, won her the Donaldson Award for best debut performance. She had three show-stopping numbers, the faraway pastiche, "A Bushel and a Peck" (initially the show's most popular song), the

wryly cynical "Take Back Your Mink", and best of all her description of the "psychosomatic" cold she has developed due to her unmarried status, "Adelaide's Lament".

After two years on Broadway Blaine came to London to recreate her role at the Coliseum, and while here appeared in the Royal Variety Show. She played Adelaide in the 1955 film version, but there was little chemistry between Blaine and a miscast Frank Sinatra (as Nathan).

She had returned to Hollywood to appear with Esther Williams in *Skirts Ahoy!* (1952), but her career was now concentrated on the theatre and night-clubs. In 1956 she replaced Shelley Winters in a strongly dramatic play about drug addiction, *A Halfful of Rain*. She returned to the musical theatre with *Say Darling* (1958, score by Jule Styne, Betty Comden and Adolph Green), starred in Carl Reiner's comedy *Enter Laughing* (1963), and replaced Jane Russell (who in turn had replaced Elaine Stritch) in the original production of *Sondheim's Company* in 1971, lending her own brand of acerbity to "The Ladies Who Lunch".

During the last two decades she worked in television, including a continuing role in the soap-opera parody *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*, in clubs and in touring productions of both plays and musicals, including *Gypsy*, *Follies*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Zorba*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Hello Dolly*.

Tom Vulliamy

Vivian Stapleton (Vivian Blaine), actress born Newark, New Jersey 21 November 1921; three times married; died New York 9 December 1995.

Eddie Clamp

The name of Clamp was a by-word for ferocity in British football during the late 1950s. In his ruthless pomp as a ball-winner for Wolverhampton Wanderers, and, briefly, for England, "Chopper Eddie" was accorded a lurid reputation akin to that enjoyed today by Vinnie Jones.

Indeed, had Eddie Clamp risen to prominence in the tabloid age, it is likely that he would have eclipsed the ostentatious Wimbledon bruiser in the notoriety stakes, for he was a more complete performer. Though renowned for his physical approach - it would be idly to deny his methods were crude at times - Clamp was no one-dimensional clogger, and, with all due respect to the not untalented Jones, the taciturn Midlander had considerably more to offer in terms of ball control and passing ability.

Having won international honours as a schoolboy, Clamp turned professional with Wolves in 1952, then developed rapidly under the aegis of Wolves' marvellous manager, Stan Cullis. He made his senior debut as a 19-year-old wing-half, against Matt Busby's Manchester United at Old Trafford, as Wolves were closing in on the First Di-

vision title in the spring of 1954. And although he did not play enough games to earn a medal that season, there was to be no shortage of honours coming Clamp's way.

By 1955-56 he was a regular member of Cullis's all-action, but undeniably skilful team - a hard man in a hard side - and two years later his strength, stamina and all-round efficiency were an important factor in the club's championship triumph.

Clamp was rewarded by a full international call-up on the eve of the 1958 World Cup finals in Sweden, and he formed an all-Wolves half-back line with Billy Wright and Bill Slater. He performed creditably in four consecutive games for his country, all of which were drawn, but widespread disappointment at England's generally sketchy showing in the game's premier tournament cost him his place - which went to the more stylish Ronnie Clayton of Blackburn Rovers - and Clamp was shunted permanently from the international stage at the age of 23.

He continued to prosper at club level, though, helping Wolves to lift a second successive title in 1959 and missing out on a hat-trick when Burnley

pipped them by a single point in 1960. That term, however, there was heavy consolation in the FA Cup, with Wolves defeating Blackburn 3-0 at Wembley. Sadly, it was a scrappy encounter, labelled the "dustbin final" in the Midlands press, a criticism which rankled with Clamp for the rest of his life.

Having distinguished himself in the famous old gold and black, Clamp accepted a new challenge in September 1961, joining Arsenal in a £34,500 deal. He had been bought to instil steel into what was then a rather languid Gunners combination, but that very combativeness was to prove his undoing. Six months after Clamp's arrival in London, his former Molineux skipper Billy Wright became Arsenal manager and took exception to "Chopper Eddie's" aggressive style. The final straw was a brutal tackle on the gentlemanly Aston Villa full-back Charlie Aitken, perpetrated right under Wright's nose, and Clamp was on his way out.

Next stop was Stoke City, whom he joined for £14,000 in September 1962, and that season he assisted a Stanley-Matthews-inspired team of veterans to top the Second Di-



'Chopper Eddie': no clogger

Photograph: Hulton Deutsch

vision. Two years on, by now aged 30, he served a short stint with Third Division Peterborough United before entering non-league circles, first with Worcester City and then with Lower Gornal.

Clamp retired from regular football in 1969 to run a building and decorating business in Wednesfield, Staffordshire, but continued to turn out in charity matches for the Wolves Old Stars. Opponents reported, of-

ten ruefully, that while he had lost his speed, he had retained that characteristic bite.

Ivan Poutling

Harold Edwin Clamp, footballer, born Coalville, Leicestershire 14 September 1934; played for Wolverhampton Wanderers 1952-61; Arsenal 1961-62; Stoke City 1962-64; Peterborough United 1964-65; capped four times by England 1958; died Wednesfield, Staffordshire 14 December 1995.

BIRTHS

BONNETT: To Jane and John, a daughter, Kate, sister for Lucy, 17 December, in Sydney.

WELLS: On 7 December, in Cape Town, to Sally (née Carr) and Richard, a daughter, Caitlin Elizabeth, a sister for Jennifer Sue.

DEATHS

KEAYS: Colonel Hastings de J., died peacefully at home on Sunday 17 December. Funeral service at St Peter's Church, Macclesbury, on Friday 22 December, 10am. Burial to L.J. Keyson and Son, 12 Charlton Road, Kew, Surrey, on 17 December 1995.

READER-BARRIS: On 16 December 1995, peacefully in Salisbury, Henriette Margaret Jean (née Loder), dearly loved wife of the late John, mother of Michael and Sarah, sister-in-law of Diana and a much-loved grandmother. Funeral and burial at St Mary's Church, Salisbury, on Thursday 21 December at 12 noon. Family flowers only please. Donations to Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), c/o P. Hunt, 16 Victoria Road, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1HL (01722 413136).

VINTER: John Stanley Marcus, suddenly on 14 December 1995. Much-loved father of Alec and Richard, and grandfather of Magdalena, Rebecca

Births, Marriages & Deaths

and Hannah. Funeral service at St Mary's Church, St Mary's Road, Weymouth, on Friday 22 December, 11am. Memorial service to be announced later. Family flowers only, but donations if wished may be sent to Oxfam.

WANNELL: On 14 December 1995, at Woodhouse Nursing Home, Patricia Winifred (née Pat Archer), aged 77 years, of Tiptonham. Beloved wife of Jack and dear mother of Anne, who will be sadly missed by all. Funeral service, Church of the Holy Cross, Station Road, Tiptonham, on Friday 22 December, 2.30pm, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), c/o P. Hunt, 16 Victoria Road, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1HL (01722 413136).

Announcements for Deaths, Births, Marriages & Deaths should be sent to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1, Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, or by telephone to 0171-233 2811 (fax 0171-233 2810). Charges are 60p per line (VAT extra).

portraits from the 16th to the 20th centuries, 1.10pm.

Highgate Scientific and Literary Association, London N6: Dr C.P. Hindley, "Health Service: expectation and reality", 7.45pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales visits Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth, to meet Police Officers and representatives of the local community. The Prince of Wales visits the Christmas Celebrations at Weymouth, Dorset, London SW1. Princess Alexandra, President, Imperial Cancer Research

Fund, attends a Carol Concert held by the Scottish House of Commons of the Fund in Glasgow, Scotland.

Changing of the Guard

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J. Donat and Miss E. E. Owen. The engagement is announced between Harriet, daughter of Mervyn Owen, and Jasper, son of Annabel and John Donat.

Birthdays

Sir Antony Buck QC, former MP 67; Mr Ross Buckland, chief executive, Unigate, 53; Mr Timothy Eggar MP, Minister of State, Trade and Industry, 44; Dame Catherine Hall, former General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, 73; The Right Rev Ian Hargrave, Bishop of Carlisle, 63; Brigadier Lewis Harris, cartographer, 85; Sir Brian Hill, former chairman, Figs & Hill, 63; Mr Syd Little, comedian, 53; Mr Robert Ponsonby, former Controller of Music, BBC, 68; The Marquess of Queensberry, former professor of ceramics, Royal College of Art, 66; Sir David Rowe-Ham, former Lord Mayor of London, 60; Lord Weir, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 64; Mr Maurice White, rock singer, 54.

Anniversaries

Births: Philip V. King of Spain, 1683; Sir William Edward Parry, Arctic explorer, 1790; John Ella, violinist and writer, 1805; Sir Stanley Unwin, publisher, 1884; Oliver Hazard Perry La Farge, author, 1901; Sir Ralph David Richardson, actor, 1902; Leonid Byich Brezhnev, Soviet leader, 1906; Jean Genet, playwright and essayist, 1910; Edith Piaf (Edith Giovanna Gassion), singer, 1915; Deshaun Amos, Pope, 401; Virus Jonassen Berling, navigator, 1741; Jean-Baptiste Vanloo, painter,

1745; Frederick Melchior, Baron von Grimm, statesman and wit, 1807; Benjamin Smith Barton, naturalist, 1815; Emily Brontë, novelist, 1848; Joseph Mallord William Turner, painter, 1812; Subhas Chandra Bose, politician, 1945. On this day: Huguenots and Catholics clashed when the Battle of Dreux was fought, 1562; during the American-Belish war of 1812, the Toronto parliament building was set alight, and Fort Niagara was taken by the British, 1813; the United States recognised the independence of Hawaii, 1842; in the New Hebrides, over 500 people were killed following a volcanic eruption, 1913; an air service between London and Moscow was begun, 1957; eight crew members were drowned from the Penlee lifeboat of Mousehole, Cornwall, as were eight people of the *Union Star* coaster, 1981; Ted Hughes was appointed Poet Laureate, 1994. Today is the Feast of St Anastasia of Antioch, St Gregory of Auxerre, St Nemesius of Alexandria and St Timothy.

Appointments

Mr Doug McAdam, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan. Mr Andrew Green, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Mr John Debie, to be British High Commissioner to the Kingdom of Swaziland. Mr George Anthony Eason, to be a circuit judge on the Northern Circuit. Mr Conrad Debn QC, elected Treasurer of Gray's Inn. Judge Kaye Lewis QC, elected Vice-Treasurer of Gray's Inn. Mr Anthony Glass QC, and Mr John Shorrocks QC, to be Masters of the Bench of the Inner Temple. Mr Justice Ahmad, Chief Justice of India, to be an Honorary Master of the Bench of the Middle Temple.

Battered woman syndrome relevant to defence

LAW REPORT

19 December 1995

Regina v Thornton, Court of Appeal (Lord Taylor of Gossforth, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Hidden and Mrs Justice Ewensworth); 13 December 1995

Medical evidence that a defendant suffered from "battered woman syndrome" which affected the defendant's personality was relevant to the jury's consideration of whether the defendant was provoked and suffered a sudden and temporary loss of self-control when she killed the deceased. The Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) allowed an appeal by Sara Elizabeth Thornton, quashed her conviction of murder and ordered a retrial.

The appellant, who suffered from a personality disorder, was subjected to violence and abuse by her alcoholic husband. She killed her husband by stabbing him with a kitchen knife. At her trial for murder, the appellant did not contend she was provoked by her husband but relied on the defence of diminished responsibility on the basis that her abnormality of mind impaired her mental responsibility. The trial judge left the issue of provocation to the jury, directing that the husband's conduct must have caused in the appellant "a sudden and temporary loss of self-

control" and would have caused a reasonable person to lose her self-control. The appellant was convicted and her appeal in 1991 dismissed. The Home Secretary referred the case to the Court of Appeal, where further medical evidence raised the appellant's personality disorder and the element of "battered woman syndrome" as further characteristics relevant to the jury's consideration of provocation. *Michael Mansfield QC and Edward Fitzgerald QC (B.M. Mansfield & Co) for the appellant; Brian Ewart QC (CPS) for the Crown.*

Lord Taylor CJ, giving the court's judgment, said that in *R v Ahluwalia* 96 Cr App R the Court of Appeal rejected the argument that the concept of provocation should accommodate the case of a woman, subjected over a period of abuse, who killed her abuser because of a "slow burn" reaction to the cumulative maltreatment rather than because of a sudden and temporary loss of self-control. That principle was reaffirmed. A defendant, even if suffering from "battered woman syndrome", could not succeed in relying on provoca-

tion unless the jury considered she suffered or might have suffered a sudden and temporary loss of self-control at the time of the killing.

That was not to say that a battered woman syndrome had no relevance to the defence of provocation. It might form an important background to what ever triggered the *actus reus*. A jury might more readily find there was sudden loss of control triggered by even a minor incident if the defendant had endured abuse over a period, on the "last straw" basis. The syndrome might have affected the defendant's personality so as to constitute a significant characteristic relevant to the jury's consideration of provocation.

It was submitted that the further medical evidence of the appellant's personality disorder and the effect of the deceased's abuse over a period on her mental make-up were characteristics which bore on her reaction to the stress of events at the time of the killing and that the jury would have had to consider whether a reasonable woman with those characteristics might have lost control as the appellant did.

At the trial, the absence of evidence to suggest that the appellant's personality disorder was relevant to provocation might have been due to the state at that time of medical knowledge which had since then progressed considerably. Recent decisions made clear that mental and physical characteristics of a defendant should be attributed by the jury to the notional reasonable person. A judge should give the jury directions as to what, on the evidence, was capable of amounting to a relevant characteristic. If the trial judge had had the assistance of the recent decisions and of the further evidence, he would have given the jury directions as to the two characteristics now relied on. Doubt was cast on the jury's verdict. The court could not be sure that the verdict was safe and satisfactory.

However the question whether the appellant did lose or might have lost her self-control at the time of the killing was essentially a matter for a jury to decide. The public interest required that issue to be determined. A fresh jury would be able fairly to try the case solely on the evidence they heard. The conviction was quashed and a retrial ordered.

Ying Hui Tan, Barrister

To tip or not to tip, what is the answer?

As a Private Member's Bill seeks to regulate service charges, **Jack O'Sullivan** looks at our attitude towards this ancient practice and how other countries compare

The British really do not care for tipping. It makes most of us feel awkward, we are not sure quite when to do it or how much to give. So we cover behind suburban nets when the postman, binman and milkman come knocking for their Christmas bonuses. As for tipping porters, most of us would rather risk a collapsed vertebrae than give a fiver to a British Rail porter. And when we do part with a few coppers, we do not so much tip as run away without the change.

The customs that surround tipping in restaurants are particularly upsetting to the British. Many establishments now assume that they will receive a gratuity. A service charge automatically added to the bill feels like a con, mentioned, if at all, only in the small print on the menu. Just as you dig deep for a bill that looks like it requires a small mortgage, you discover another hefty slice, supposedly optional, on top when the bill arrives. And it's never clear who benefits from our largesse: is a tip lining a restaurateur's pocket or saving the waiter from starvation?

Despite general distaste for tipping, only the brave and the mean dare to refuse. After all, those deprived of their tip can cause terrible embarrassment: everyone has heard of the taxi drivers who storm off, bawling obscenities; the ship's steward who returns an ungenerous offering with the words, "I think you need this more than I do, sir." How many people have never dared return to a hairdresser's salon out of guilt for being short of cash last time and

failing to leave the customary 10 per cent? And then there are the tales of nose-to-nose confrontations with New York waiters for whom a Brit's low hard-earned dimes are rarely enough.

The issue has always been messy for the British. Back in 1908, the *Times* published correspondence on the problems of visiting a friend's country seat and having to tip everyone from the housekeeper to the chauffeur. So costly had these incidental items become that one writer despaired, announcing that the time had "come for the man of small means to sell his

European countries, where waiting at table is considered a skilled profession that should be properly rewarded. Today, most of Britain's neighbours make service inclusive in the bill. In France, for example, a waiter's wage is not expected to depend on the whim of a customer: an extra 15 per cent service charge is automatically added to the price of food and drink. This sum is distributed to the staff, from the chef and the doorman to the hat-check staff. The concept of the tip survives, but a gratuity is meant to cover only especially good service. In

tainment, such as a floor show. Restaurants would also be required to fill in credit and slips in full when presenting them for signature. At the moment, some provide billing slips with a space left for a tip, even when the menu states that a service charge has already been included in the price. This means that some diners are forced into paying a tip twice, which can, in theory, add a total of 30 per cent to the bill.

The Consumers Association supports Lord Bradford's Bill because it makes life simpler for consumers. Some restaurateurs are not so sure: the change might increase their costs. As it stands, service charges are not generally included in the total price, so owners do not have to pay VAT or national insurance contributions on tips.

Those involved in waiting are not dancing on their tables with joy at the proposal. Nothing in the Bill requires that the service charge goes to the staff. So catering staff might not be any better off. Currently, fewer than half of all restaurant workers get to keep tips given by customers. In any case, the chances of legislation reaching the statute book are slim. Last year Michael Fabricant, Conservative MP for mid-Stuffordshire, tabled a similar measure, which died for lack of government support. Ministers have in the past ruled out a change in the law, preferring to let the catering industry regulate itself. So the hot tip is still the British diner will be living with confusion and embarrassment in 1996.

In France waiters' wages do not depend on the whim of a customer

guns and forget all about grouse and pheasants, and to cultivate golf as a casual recreation". Part of British discomfort with tipping springs from its origins in a master-servant relationship, rather than as a transaction between equals. The origins of the word are uncertain. It is said to stand for "To Insure Prompt", a phrase coined as a financial incentive to Victorian stagecoach drivers who delivered letters. But the term is also traced by the *Oxford English Dictionary* to the early seventeenth century, when it meant "the giving of a gratuity to an inferior". The survival of tipping in Britain is, perhaps, a mark of how we still regard waiters as a subspecies, to be treated poorly, as if from below stairs.

The same is not true in other

short, the Continent has shaken off the feudalism that still bedevils the relationship in Britain between those who serve and those who are served. This is the example that Lord Bradford, owner of Punter's restaurant in Covent Garden, would like to copy. He wants restaurants to charge prices that are fully inclusive of service, with notice that staff do not expect anything in the way of a tip or gratuity. He has introduced a Private Member's Bill into the House of Lords to that effect. The second reading of the bill is due on 10 January.

This measure would still allow exceptional service to be rewarded, at the customer's discretion. But it would outlaw cover charges, unless the restaurant provided specific enter-

Ten ways to avoid giving a tip

- 1 Do a runner. This is, however, a heartless strategy, since waiters are often expected to pay the bill for absentee customers.
- 2 Emigrate to China or Japan, where tipping is not part of the culture.
- 3 At the hairdressers, fumble while searching for money until the stylist has moved on to the next client and cannot embarrass you.
- 4 Start an intense altercation at the table with your partner when it is time to pay the bill. No one would dare to interrupt.
- 5 When staying at a hotel, always eat in the restaurant and ask for the meal to be added to the room bill, to be paid at the end of your stay.

- 6 Hide behind the curtain whenever you hear bins or gold tops rattling the week before and after Christmas.
- 7 Pretend to be foreign and stupid.
- 8 Dine exclusively in gentlemen's clubs, where tipping is strictly taboo on the grounds that staff are to be treated more as domestic retainers than as restaurant employees.
- 9 Provolve a row with whoever is providing the service: accuse the driver of taking the long route, burst into tears because your newly trimmed fringe is too short, or complain that there was no sign of a cherry in your Singapore Sling.
- 10 Tell minicab and taxi drivers that you work for the Inland Revenue.

Sir Christopher Hogg, recently installed chairman of the National Theatre, is the new chairman-designate of the international food and drinks company Allied Domecq. Which would be hunky dory were it not for the fact that Allied Domecq is chief sponsor of the National's rival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, giving it a cool £5.2m.

Both theatre companies loyally say they see "no problems at all" in the fact that Sir Christopher, a former businessman of the year, will have to juggle two hats with a dexterity that would grace either's stage. Allied Domecq advises the RSC on marketing, giving its best counsel on



Sir Christopher's double act

how the company should present itself as the country's foremost theatrical company. This will in no way interfere with Sir Christopher's job as chairman of the National Theatre, where he will chair board meetings on how the National should market itself as the country's foremost theatrical company.

Neither should there be any conflict in funding. Sir Christopher, as chairman of Allied Domecq, will no doubt tell his board that there could be no arts flagship more worthy of support than the Royal Shakespeare Company. Sir Christopher, as chairman of the National Theatre



board, will be telling likely business sponsors - including, presumably, Allied Domecq - that there can be no arts flagship more worthy of support than the National Theatre.

The campaign spearheaded by Lord Hanson to bring back the traditional stiff upper-lipped dark blue British passport has failed to secure the support of Douglas Hurd. The name of the man who has served as both foreign and home secretary would give a huge boost to Lord Hanson's wish to replace the limp burgundy Euro passport. But Mr Hurd is remaining silent. A spokeswoman in his office said he had nothing to say about the matter and would not verify any speculation about his views. I suspect Mr Hurd is a fan of the red Euro passport. And I also suspect I know why. As the relevant cabinet minister at the time the Euro passports were introduced in 1988, Mr Hurd received the very first Euro passport, with the memorable serial number 000000001. Mrs Hurd's is 000000002. Few campaigns can be worth sacrificing the look of admiration on the passport control officer's face.

In the police force they are chuckling over a rare nugget from the Home Office minister David Maclean. According to *Police Review*, Mr Maclean was asked recently by an MP which forces had dispensed with underwater search and recovery units. Maclean replied: "I understand that Cheshire, North Wales, Merseyside

and Greater Manchester have amalgamated their resources to form a single regional unit.... Indeed they did: 18 years ago.

There would seem to be an element of contradiction in talking of moral conscience and an advertising department, but a sporadic fit of morality has infected the ads department at the *Sunday Times*. The unlikely victim is Opera North, the Leeds-based opera company.

The newspaper withdrew one of the company's adverts just before going to press, saying that the wording "was unsuitable for a family newspaper". Opera North is still reeling from the shock. "The advert was part of a campaign to promote a season dubbed 'the Most Romantic Season in Years', explains a spokeswoman. "The first one showed a couple in evening dress leaving the opera, accompanied by the caption: 'Darling, that was wonderful'." The second - which is the one that the *Sunday Times* refused - shows the same couple, accompanied by the caption: "They came, did you?" "OK - so it's a bit cheeky," admits a spokeswoman. "But it's nothing compared to Haagen-Dazs or Benetton ads. We're particularly annoyed because the *Sunday Times* effectively spiked our campaign at its peak timing, and we have no more money to advertise with anybody else."

Advertising staff at the *Sunday Times* told Opera North that they felt the "people in the photograph are standing too close". The fact that they are fully clothed cut no ice.

Bob Hope fans will be pleased to hear that the 92-year-old comedian is still proving his virility, albeit on the golf course. A colleague of Eagle Eye who

has just visited the great man at his Los Angeles home found that Hope continues to play a round of golf every day, with a regular tee-off time of 4pm each afternoon at the Toluca Lake golf club. This means that he has a regular chance of joining the select band of golfers worldwide who have managed to "shoot their age". Asked what he went round in these days, Hope replied in vintage style: "80 or 90. If it gets any hotter than that, I don't play."



Bob's all teed up and firing

Mad cow disease scares would not have frightened the late Elvis Presley, one feels. An *Arroz* programme to be aired on New Year's Day about the King's eating habits will feature an interview with his cook at Graceland. She says she served him a regular diet of cheeseburgers and fried peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. "The input's gotta be just as great as the output," was Presley's justification for his diet, an adage that will, no doubt, become the advertising slogan of some hamburger joint. He was a man of some culinary variety, though, having a penchant for fried squirrel, which must have made a wholesome break from another favourite snack, "frol's gold". French loaves split twice lengthways, each spread with a jar of peanut butter, a jar of jam and a pound of crisp-fried bacon.

Generation Why

by Tony Reeve and Steve Wat



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An Ofplot to be done

"You'd better bring him out here and let us deal with him," the mob cried. But Virginia stood her ground. No one was going to get their hands on the lottery regulator, Peter Davis, until there had been a proper trial. Mad Dennis Skinner could howl as much as he liked.

"Black" Jack Cunningham could do his worst, but she refused to offload the head of Ofplot until she had "considered the matter very carefully". A "kneejerk" reaction was not appropriate, she said, so Mr Davis was spared to fight another day.

The lynch-happy citizens of Parliament, UK (population 651), had taken to the streets because of revelations about the regulator in the backwash of last week's claim and counterclaim concerning Richard Branson and the American company GTECH. Mr Branson claims that he informed Mr Davis of an attempt by GTECH executives to bribe him. GTECH rejects the original allegation and Mr Davis denies that he was so informed.

This is not, however, why Labour was calling for Mr Davis's head. Mr Branson's accusations and the response to them now look likely to end up in court. But during the week it transpired that, while in America last year, Mr Davis had flown in a GTECH plane and that he is a close personal friend of a senior member of the GTECH board. Important MPs, including the chairman of the influential Public Accounts Committee, Robert Sheldon, have argued that these facts cast doubt on Mr Davis's judgement.

Is this fair? Mr Davis, a staid accountant of understated mien, argues that he only availed himself of the GTECH jet to travel between GTECH sites, that this saved money, and that he submitted a full

and detailed account to the Department of National Heritage immediately on his return. As to the friendship, this was 20 years old and had played absolutely no role in any decision he has ever made as regulator.

It is hard to conclude, on the basis of the evidence, that Mr Davis should be summarily executed. It is a little worrying that the lottery regulator should turn out to have such a long-standing friendship with a senior figure in one of the world's largest lottery companies, but it does not appear that Mr Davis has ever attempted to hide this.

But Mr Davis ought to reflect on why it is that so many people are dissatisfied with his performance. Bluntly, they are not convinced that his attitude to the monopoly that runs the lottery, Camelot (22.5 per cent owned by GTECH), has been anything like robust enough. True, the terms of the contract with Camelot were laid down by Parliament and Mr Davis was limited to ensuring the proper running of the lottery and seeing that money was getting through to charities. But Mr Davis has interpreted this role in the most restricted way possible. While Camelot has made vast profits, the regulator has stayed silent on the question of whether some charities have lost out badly, on whether Parliament might look again at the formula for funding good causes, and on whether there should be major changes in the way the contract is handled next time.

Contrast this supine attitude with the proactive way that Don Cruickshank from Ofel (telecommunications) has dealt with issues in his area, including Mr Blair's autumn BT brainwave. Now that's what consumers call regulation.

The end is not nigh for reform in Russia

On the face of it, there is not much for the West to cheer in the results of Sunday's parliamentary elections in Russia. The Communist Party is the clear winner, the ultra-nationalists of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy appear likely to capture second place, and moderate reformers and pro-Western liberals trail in third and fourth. Less than four years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of history's most catastrophic experiments in murderous utopianism, the siren songs of Communist nostalgia clearly remain attractive to millions of Russian voters. Equally disappointing was the failure of reformists and democrats to form a united electoral front in opposition to extremists of both left and right.

Yet it would be a mistake to paint a picture of uniform bleakness. There are two crucial reasons for suggesting that this is not necessarily the end of the road for reform. Yesterday's refusal of the markets to panic reflects an awareness that the end is not yet nigh.

First, even in Poland and Hungary – the two most adamantly anti-Communist countries in Eastern Europe – former Communists now dominate national politics. Effect on political and economic reform: not much. The Communists came to power because of a generalised discontent. But they have few long-term solutions. In practice they, too, find themselves forced to administer the austerity measures that they found so easy to criticise in opposition.

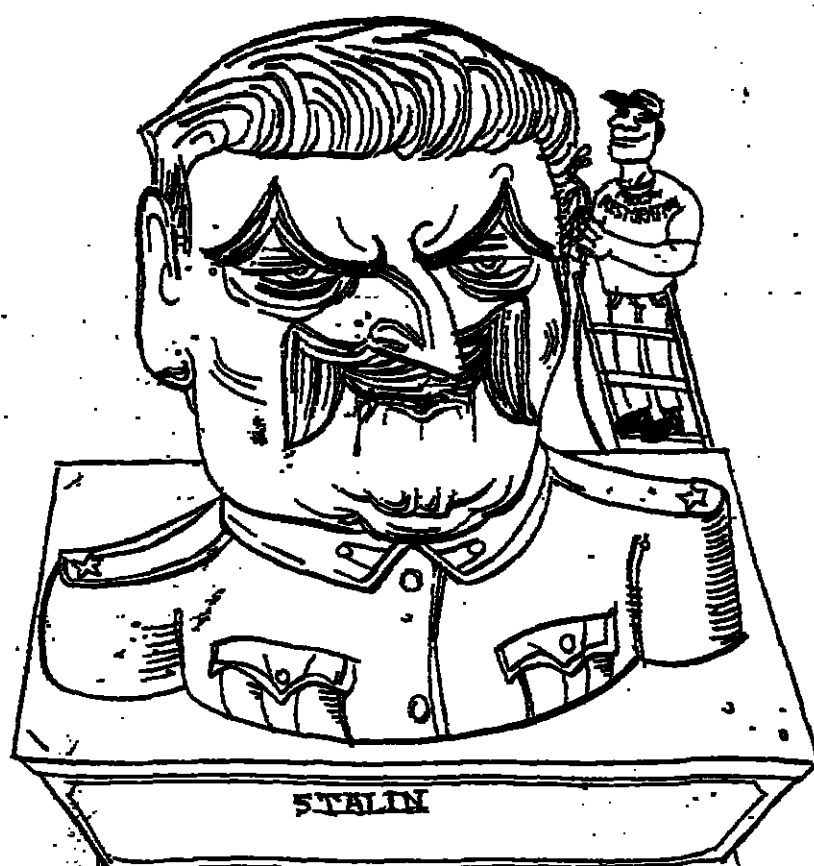
Second, this lack of viable answers means that the long-term prospects for Communist success in Russia as in Eastern Europe are poor. It is plausible to suppose that the Communists' performance

in the next few years, since they will be unable to deliver an improvement in living standards, will be less impressive than the result on Sunday.

So far, Russian voters have tended to zig-zag from one extreme to another. In 1993, the far-right Mr Zhirinovskiy was the main winner. Now, he and his cutely named Liberal Democrats have partly given way to the Communists. Resentments at the collapse of the Soviet empire, combined with the real hardship of life in Russia today, means that millions of Russians cast their vote for a Communist Party which has a nationalist economic and political platform: Zhirinovskiy, without the lunatic tricks.

But, even before the collapse of Soviet Communism, it was clear that chauvinist resentments in Russia, on one hand, and loyalty to the Soviet way of life, on the other, ran so deep that any transition to a more democratic system would be troubled at best. So far, at least, what is extraordinary is not how badly things have gone wrong but how much has been achieved.

Meanwhile, the terms of Russia's constitution mean that the main battle lies ahead. Victory in June's presidential election is the real prize. Even here, however, it need not be bad news all the way. The West assumes that the ailing Boris Yeltsin is still the only hope for Russia's future. The West is wrong – just as it was wrong about Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991. Russia is, to put it mildly, in a terrible mess. But, however much Russians complain, the reforms are here to stay, whoever wins in June. One day, those changes might even bear unpoisoned fruit.



Rebuilding Russia's national heritage

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Better ways of spending money for education Santa Claus takes on new ID

From Professor Joan Freeman

Sir: Now we have the evidence that private schooling has little or no effect on children's adult achievements ("Value of private schooling may be over-estimated", 14 December) – what really counts in life is ability – it is time for a rethink on the Government's Assisted Places Scheme. This scheme moves bright children, whose parents could not pay the fees, from state to private schools. Instead, the Government pays for them, a practice that costs the taxpayer about £105m a year.

Independent research has shown that most of the chosen children are from professional homes, such as those of schoolteachers, and that the most socially deprived children are the least likely to be taken up for these places. As the results from Sussex University, carried out on 17,000 people, show that there is precious little benefit to the pupils from private education, who is gaining? It can only be the private schools, who are not only benefiting from this financial largess, but also by having the leaven of so many of the brightest children in their classrooms. In fact, if the state schools are

doing as well by their pupils with very much less to hand, what couldn't they do with an equal amount? I expect that any state schoolteacher, particularly those whose brightest pupils have been removed from their care for "improved" education, could think of many better ways of spending that money.

Yours faithfully,
JOAN FREEMAN
University of Middlesex
London, W1
15 December

From Mr K. G. James

Sir: Why give such prominence to yet another piece of meaningless educational "research"?

The study, based as it was on just one group of children born in 1958, cannot be taken as relevant to any group born even just a few years later, and is certainly not relevant to children at school today. In 1958, the grammar schools were providing bright children from all socio-economic backgrounds with a first-class academic education at least as good as that available in the private sector, regardless of ability to pay. Eleven years later, most of those grammar schools were still around, selecting their pupils

in the same way as the study group assessed them. Indeed, many of the studied group will have completed their secondary education under the guidance of grammar-school teachers, even if by then their schools had gone comprehensive. In circumstances like these, it is hardly earth-shattering to find that paying for education just wasn't worth it. (Note the use of the past tense!)

Today the grammar schools have gone, and those parents who seek a guaranteed high-quality academic education for their children either have to pay or choose where they live very carefully. For far too many people neither option is viable. Instead of continuing to research this one group of 35-year-olds that went through an education system that no longer exists, Professor Saunders would be better employed looking at today's circumstances to see if there are any bright children out there who are being prevented from achieving their full potential simply because their parents can neither pay the fees nor afford to move. I think we all know what he will find.

Yours faithfully,
K. G. JAMES
Blagdon, Avon

From Mrs Mayke Hogestijn

Sir: Gretchen Mason (letter, 15 December) was closest to the truth in the debate about the origins of Santa Claus. He is, in fact, a mixture of the Dutch Saint Nicholas and the Scandinavian Jul Tomten (Christmas elf).

Saint Nicholas is a bishop from Madrid who has the jolly habit of distributing presents to all Dutch children on the eve of his own birthday on 6 December. The evening of 5 December finds him astride his white stallion (brought with him from Spain aboard his great white steamship) on the roofs of Holland, while his Moorish helpers (all called "Black Pete") pop down the chimneys with the presents.

The holy man is hundreds of years old and thus has a long white beard. He is dressed as a bishop should, in long flowing robes, complete with staff and mitre. The predominant colour of his garb is red.

The Jul Tomten was a small elf, clad in grey, who on Christmas eve took care of the farm animals while everyone else was making merry (in short, too drunk to feed the animals themselves). In exchange for his labours, a dish of porridge was put on the steps outside for him.

These two were indeed "married" in the US, the Jul Tomten growing taller and distinctly fatter, and donning Saint Nicholas's colour of garment and long white beard. He also began distributing presents to children.

The reindeer and sled (although typically Scandinavian products) are an American invention and, sadly, the Black Pites have disappeared. Talk about layoffs...

Yours sincerely,
MAYKE HOGESTIJN
Marlow, Buckinghamshire
15 December

From Mr Lars Breimer
Sir: The Swedish artist Jenny Nystrom (1854-1946) created Father Christmas (Jultomten) as he appears to us, not Haddon Sundblom, as stated in Richard Halliday's letter of 15 December. Jenny Nystrom won the gold medal of the Academy of Arts in 1881. From about 1890 she drew annual Christmas cards for Axel Eliasson, a publisher of greeting cards in Sweden. She used her father as a model.

Present imperfect

From Ms Susan Harris
Sir: I hope Daniel Jeffreys ("No polka-dot ribbons please, we're British", 13 December) doesn't come shopping in the busy retail outlet where I work. I could easily conjure up some hostility and incomprehension for his request for the gift-wrapping of purchases, especially from the long queue of customers waiting behind him.

Yours faithfully,
SUSAN HARRIS
Jersey
Channel Islands
13 December

BSE licked?

From Dr Richard Huddy
Sir: Am I alone in concern about glue? I always thought that it was made from animal bones

Sundblom, like all Swedes, would have been thoroughly familiar with Jenny Nystrom's cards and illustrations of children's books. Sundblom's contribution was to make Santa more round and give him reindeer. In Jenny Nystrom's cards, the sleigh is pulled by a horse; reindeer are not very strong. Jultomten is also sometimes accompanied by his goat. The reason why Swedes stick straw goats under their Christmas trees is that they deliver presents to the homes which Santa cannot reach.

Yours faithfully,
LARS BREIMER
Richmond, Surrey
15 December

From Mr Maurice O'C. Walshe
Sir: I had a good laugh at Richard Halliday's letter (15 December). The figure of Father Christmas as we know him goes back a lot further than 1931, or even 1921. I was born in 1911, and so had my first encounter with "Sandy Claws" (as I at first understood his name to be) just before World War I. Even in those dark days he was always there at Christmas in a red jacket. Just once, when I was about five or six, he appeared on some Christmas object in dark blue. I was most indignant: it wasn't right!

Coca-Cola merely exploited a well-known stereotype. The Swedish artist was no doubt chosen for his self-portrait because he looked like that figure.

Yours respectfully,
MAURICE O'C. WALSH
Berkhamshead, Hertfordshire
15 December

From Ms Frances H. Killingley
Sir: Pace Jonathan Leckie (letter, 13 December), Father Christmas was well-known in this country long before Prince Albert's day. He rates an entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which cites a pamphlet of 1658 entitled *Examination and tryall of old Father Christmas* – doubtless the old fellow had run into trouble under the Cromwellian regime. A 15th century carol (no 21 in the *Oxford Book of Carols*) features Sir Christmas who brings news of the birth of the Saviour and exhorts the company to "make good cheer and be right merry".

Yours faithfully,
FRANCES H. KILLINGLEY
Wivenhoe, Essex

Present imperfect

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Yours faithfully,
SUSAN HARRIS
Jersey
Channel Islands
13 December

BSE licked?

From Dr Richard Huddy
Sir: Am I alone in concern about glue? I always thought that it was made from animal bones

etc, ground up. If this is still the case, should we not all stop licking stamps and envelopes? Sincerely,
RICHARD HUDDY
Manchester

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Uncle Jim gets carried away with sewage

Continuing our Christmas nature story, in which Uncle Jim takes Sally and Peter for a walk on Boxing Day and tries to persuade them he knows more about nature than they do.

"So, why is it called a sewage farm?" said Peter, wrinkling his nose as the acrid rural smell drifted slowly across the field. "I mean, it's not really a farm, is it? It doesn't produce anything, does it? It doesn't produce sewage, does it, even though it's called a sewage farm? It's not like a beef farm, which produces beef, or a dairy farm, which produces dairy produce... OK, a sewage farm takes sewage in but it doesn't send sewage out. It sends clean recycled water out. I think, but it doesn't call itself a water farm. So why...?"

"So why don't you just stop talking for a minute and let me have a little word in edgeways?" said Uncle Jim, a small vein beginning to throb in his forehead, which both the children noticed with a glow of achievement. It sometimes took a lot to wind Uncle Jim up, but he was reacting nicely today.

Uncle Jim breathed slowly and deeply to relax himself. He felt better. "The word farm is often used in a jocular and inaccurate way to denote a workplace," he said. "Think of



MILES KINGTON

the expression 'funny farm'... "What's a funny farm, Uncle Jim?" said Sally.

"The phrase 'funny farm' was introduced to replace the phrase 'loony bin'," said Uncle Jim. "There was a long time when the nature of mental illness was not understood, only slightly feared, so people shortened 'lunatic asylum' to 'loony bin' to defuse their fears. Then 'loony bin' came to seem rather a cruel phrase, so it was replaced by 'funny farm'. 'Funny farm' in its turn fell foul of political correctness, so that has also been phased out."

"And what has it been replaced by?" "Well, the Tories couldn't think of a new name for 'funny farm', so they decided to turn all mentally ill people out into the streets. This is called 'returning them to the community'." There was a pause.

"And why is it called a sewage farm?"

"Well, you have to remember that what we think of as a farm – a jolly place full of chickens in the yard and rabbits in the field – has been replaced by something much more bleak, and much less like the place depicted in children's books. Pesticides, modern genetic crop experiments, EEC directives, mechanisation – all these have transformed the old-style country farm into an outdoor factory. When people use the term 'factory farming', they usually refer to the indoors totalitarian chicken battery or intensive pig breeding unit, but in truth all farming today, except on some free range or rare breed farms, is factory farming. A farm is a large outdoor green factory. 'Farm' has become another word for 'factory'."

"So 'sewage farm' just means 'sewage factory'?" said Peter slowly.

"That's it," said Uncle Jim happily, never loath to depress the children. "Any other questions?" "Yes," said Sally. "Is this the start of winter or the end of the autumn?"

"Well," said Uncle Jim, "theoretically winter begins on 21 December with the solstice, but nature is never quite that neat. If you look in the hedgerow, you will see that there are

many red berries still on the hawthorn tree and a lot of old man's beard still hanging on the bushes. Now, those are both autumn sights, as they are all part of the great fruit and seed scene. But if you look carefully at the hedge again, you will see that there are already catkins hanging on the twigs. Catkins are a springtime sight, yet here they are already."

"I thought catkins never came till the new year," said Sally.

"That's only because we have been taught not to see them till the new year," said Uncle Jim. "Everyone is taught that catkins and sticky buds come after Christmas. This is rubbish. They've been around for weeks. It's just that we don't notice them till after Christmas. Look at the chestnut tree. It's stiff with sticky buds!"

"When I look at the hedge," said Peter, "all I can see is nasty broken branches."

"That's because the farmer has been flailing the hedge," said Uncle Jim. "Of all the nasty, destructive, ugly, useless methods developed by modern farming, this is undoubtedly..."

Miles Kington writes: I'm sorry – I thought Uncle Jim was going to be a cheery old soul. He's turned out a right misery. I think we'll pull the plug on him right there.

Trouble in Tibet

From Mr Hua Jinzhou
Sir: In his article about the choice of a new Panchen Lama ("Tibet in turmoil over ruin of ancient rituals", 8 December), Tim McGirk wrote:

"The Chinese are attempting to smash an occult ritual that has persisted in Tibet for hundreds of years."

This is sheer nonsense. The search for and determination of the 11th Panchen Lama was conducted strictly in accordance with religious ritual and historical convention and has won the support of religious personnel and believers in Tibet.

On the contrary, it is the Dalai Lama who violated the ritual and convention on the issue of Panchen Lama's reincarnation in an attempt to deny China's sovereignty over Tibet and stir up trouble in Tibet by depriving the right of the central government to the final determination of the reincarnation.

What he has done is utterly illegal and invalid, and it is only natural that it has been rejected by the religious personnel and believers in Tibet. Sincerely yours,
HUA JINZHOU
Press Counsellor
Chinese Embassy
London, W1
13 December

Church schools want ballots, too

The Government is in danger of looking both anti-democratic and ignorant, says Judith Judd

ANDREW MARR
Columnist of the Year

"Social justice" implies that society is inherently unjust unless civilised by political action. Today, that suggests support for a decent welfare state and attacks on dangerous concentrations of wealth and power. But it could involve radical changes to pensions

There is a potential programme there which, if it were actually achieved in office, would represent "left" values just as adequately, and perhaps more so, than the statist socialism nostalgically celebrated by Blair's critics. The changes to which he

But for the time being, most voters seem to agree with Blair's modest optimism, just as they disagreed with those mournful and angry folk who roared and bickered in the wilderness. Life back in the mainstream may be less romantic; but it is where the rest of us live.

Even if the Prime Minister and his advisers can be forgiven for failing to understand the workings of the churches' minds, their difficulty in grasping the effect of his proposal to abolish parental ballots is bewildering. Why deny to church school parents the rights enjoyed by the parents of every other child? They instantly become second-class citizens who can be told what to do by their governors. Another option in the Government's consultation paper is even worse: it suggests that all church schools would be assumed to have opted out

It is anti-democratic and it is

The final programme, broadcast last night, closed with shots of John Smith's coffin and funeral (and for

Does this mean that, so far as electoral politics is concerned, "the left" is dead, too – that we are all Conservatives now? Blair thinks not, and rightly. It is a historic oddity that we are still obliged to discuss politics by sole reference to the seating arrangements of the French National Assembly more than 200 years ago; but "left" is still recognisable as a clutch of atti-

"Social justice" implies that society is inherently unjust unless civilised by political action. Today, that suggests support for a decent welfare state and attacks on dangerous concentrations of wealth and power. But it could involve radical changes to pensions

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Behind the scenes, however, bishops and church officials take a less sanguine view. Rab Butler's 1944 Education Act, which established the present arrangements for church

It is anti-democratic and it is

The Communists' parliamentary success could bring reform to a halt, argues Martin McCauley

The general feeling is that anyone over 45 without a job will find it difficult to get one

matism of the Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov, in reality a social democratic agenda with the acceptance of a regulated market, to more hard-line Communists who would like to see renationalisation of privatised compa-

Chernomyrdin has failed to convey any sense of hope to the voters

While the Duma itself has virtually no power, the Communists still need a parliamentary majority to pass their legislation, which means they will need to seek tactical short-term alliances with various other groups in the Duma.

Democrats, the nationalists everyone abroad loves to hate, have done much better than expected. A Communist nationalist alliance would have a majority in parliament. But there are good reasons to think it will not happen. Both parties regard Sunday's elections as a primary for the forthcoming presidential elections. Both therefore are anxious to maintain their distinctive identities to maximise their electoral support in that contest. Moreover, the Communists have an eye on their image internationally. They wish to present themselves to the world as a modern reform party working along social-democratic lines, an aspiration that fits ill with Zhirinov's unsavoury reputation abroad. And third, the economic policies of the Liberal Democrats are a mish-mash of

The Communists have also flirted with the idea of alliance with one or other of the pro-reform parties. The most likely would be Yabloko, well-established and led by Grigory Yavlinsky, a clever economist who is highly respected in the West.

Voters have stopped listening to Yeltsin's rhetoric and expect material improvement

Voters have stopped listening to President Yeltsin's rhetoric and expect hard evidence of material improvement. The irony of Russian politics is that an all-powerful president, constitutionally speaking, is at this moment powerless. Yeltsin's future, and the future of reform, depends on economic forces not national ones.

The writer is senior lecturer in politics at the School of Slavonic Studies, University of London.

schools independence. Once a school opts out, the church ceases to pay its 15 per cent

force where persuasion has failed.

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The writer is senior lecturer in politics at the School of Slavonic Studies, University of London.

It might seem paradoxical that an important part of the Government's policy for securing a healthy and confident fishing industry is to take measures that obviously lead to pain and

Fisheries scientists, both in this country and abroad, tell us that many of our most important stocks are at their lowest historic levels. Indeed, they recommend that catches of plaice and herring in the North Sea and mackerel around our shores be cut by nearly half next year in order to avoid the risk of these stocks disappearing into economic extinction. At all costs we need to avoid the situation that occurred in Canada's Grand Banks where stocks of cod, once

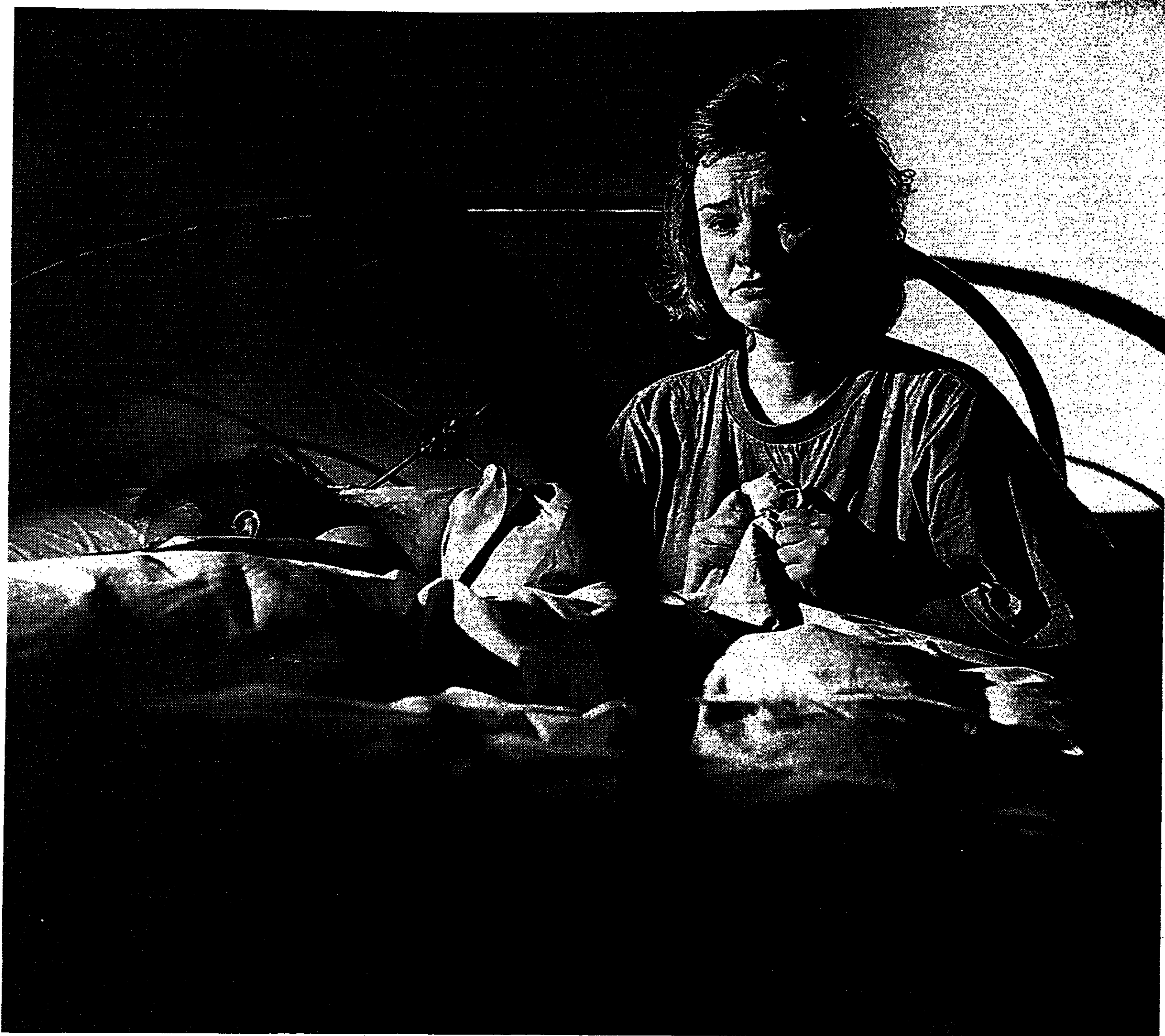
The problem is of too many fishermen, with increasingly sophisticated equipment to find and catch the remaining stocks, chasing too few fish. Conservation - to ensure there are fish for tomorrow's fishermen as well as today's - is the reason that European fisheries ministers have, in recent years, set targets for each member state to reduce their overall fishing "effort". The UK's current means of reducing effort is paying fishermen to leave the industry, the alternative, of restricting the number of days each

In pursuing the policy we need to bear in mind that the communities affected need time to adapt. Newlyn has had 16 boats accepted for decommissioning this year. One should not underestimate the impact of this on the locality and there is a need to proceed gradually; equally, there needs to be stability in fisheries management from one year to the next, avoiding sharp changes in quotas as far as we can.

Next year, fisheries ministers will discuss a further round of targets for

member states to bring their fleets more into line with available supplies of fish; I will be seeking the best possible deal for our fishermen. Opponents of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which is being debated in the House of Commons today, should realise that if there was no CFP, it would have to be invented. Fish know no national boundaries, so only by international agreement can the issue of conservation, without which the industry has no future, be properly dealt with.

The writer is Fisheries Minister.



**When you
just
can't talk to
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COMMENT

Advisers hate the idea of general anti-avoidance provisions because clients would then demand the exercise of their judgement to steer them through the grey areas. But why are they so reluctant to do this?

A tax crackdown ordinary folk might welcome

The discovery that the Inland Revenue is thinking of introducing general anti-tax avoidance measures has brought a predictable bout of whingeing from tax advisers. The idea is to require businesses to demonstrate that transactions are carried out for a business purpose rather than for pure tax reasons. This would make life harder for companies such as News International, which has moved profits around the group to minimise tax in the UK.

While ordinary folk might think that the new approach might keep corporations on the straight and narrow, tax specialists are concerned that it would not work. They admit that general anti-avoidance provisions do exist in such territories as Canada and New Zealand, but claim they are not particularly effective.

What they are really worried about is the lack of certainty if they have to prove a business rather than a tax minimising purpose behind each transaction. It might seem that tax advisers benefit from confusion in the law, because of the amount of work it generates. They deny this, claiming it is better for business to be able to tell clients that they will definitely be taxed on X, but will be caught for Y. Hence the warm welcome for last week's paper on tax simplification – because professionals believe clearer legislation will be easier to understand and create certainty about what the law says.

They have the idea of general anti-avoidance provisions because clients would then

demand the exercise of judgement as their advisers steer them through the grey areas. But why are they so reluctant to do this? Surely judgement and expertise are what professionals are in business to offer clients?

One prominent tax specialist even conjures up the old notion of a threat to Britain's commercial reputation. Companies might be put off making deals because companies would be under much greater pressure to go to the Inland Revenue for an advance ruling on whether a transaction is acceptable or not. That would require mountains of paperwork.

Perhaps it is this line of argument that best proves the sense of the Revenue's case. Does it not imply that many transactions make better tax sense than business sense? The really compelling argument, though, is that pre-transaction rulings are already routine in some areas of UK taxation as well as elsewhere in the corporate arena. Indeed, the Office of Fair Trading allows advisers not only to ask for prior approval of mergers but to negotiate deals to make them more acceptable. Tax advisers should be relishing the thought of similar freedoms.

Amec wins reprieve, not a rescue

After fighting a poor campaign, Amec beat off Kvaerner by a much wider margin than it expected or perhaps deserved. There

was, after all, that unsuccessful foray at the beginning when it tried to talk merger with Sir Alfred McAlpine, and only last week the company dropped its public relations advisers after an embarrassing fracas with the Takeover Panel over leaks. Kvaerner's advisers, SG Warburg, must be reflecting there is no justice in the world.

But it is clear enough why they lost. The 90p share offer for the preference shares was lower than expected and went down poorly. And the decision to make the bid final and set a foreshortened 21 day timetable – as the rules allow – removed all flexibility for negotiation and left institutions feeling they were being pushed around.

Amec is at the bottom of the engineering and construction cycle and there are two reasons to take it over now: the industrial logic of the merger, as argued in detail by Kvaerner, and the scope for speculative gains by buying a company cheaply just on the turn of the market.

Amec has not excelled itself in recent years, and Sir Alan Cockshaw was in charge then and remains at the helm of the company. There was natural scepticism about whether he could deliver the fruits of the recovery as well as he promised. But the card in his favour was that institutions were looking at an each way bet that will probably be resolved, one way or another, during 1996.

Kvaerner, which was hinting a few days ago that it would dump its 26 per cent stake if it lost, failed to repeat this threat in its

statement last night, after the result came through. The stake will overhang the market, but it will also make a renewed bid – either by Kvaerner in a year's time or another party before then – a distinct possibility. No wonder PDM, the fund managers with a 14 per cent stake, felt justified in backing the management, for the moment. But this is a reprieve, not a rescue.

Why Fed should ease pressure now

Markets on either side of the Atlantic plunged yesterday on fears that Chairman Alan Greenspan and the rest of the Federal Open Market Committee won't cut US interest rates today. But there must be a very good chance that they will. They certainly should.

The latest shenanigans in Washington over the budget clearly prompted the sell-off on Wall Street. With some reason: the US Fed has indicated that a budget deal would be rewarded with a further cut in interest rates following the quarter per cent reduction in early July. So the second partial shutdown of the Federal Government in a matter of weeks was hardly designed to cause a market rally.

But a more compelling view is that the markets had simply run ahead of themselves in the long bull run. Last week, the US long bond dipped below 6 per cent on several

occasions during the course of trading. In other words, investors who were willing to lock up funds for 30 years were being paid a yield of a princely quarter of a per cent more than the short-term rate of interest set by the US Fed. Even after yesterday's mayhem, investors in long bonds were only getting half a per cent more for their pains.

The markets have thus clearly been signalling their view that the Fed's policy is too tight. The most recent readings on the state of the economy suggest they are right. They have pointed to a slowing economy and an absence of any inflationary threat.

Jobs growth in the last two months has been modest. Industrial production has been flat since August, bringing the annual rate of increase sharply down to under 2 per cent compared with over 6 per cent at the beginning of the year.

The inflationary background is also favourable. Consumer prices were unchanged in November – the first time there has been no monthly increase in four years. The annual rate of inflation fell from 2.8 to 2.6 per cent.

This picture of a slowing economy and a favourable inflation outlook should persuade the Fed to act today despite the latest theatre in Washington over the budget negotiations. If the Fed doesn't ease rates down by a further quarter point, then the markets should contain their disappointment: it will then be likely to cut by even more – a half percentage point – in January.

Market mayhem on fears that US will hold rates

PAUL WALLACE and DIANE COYLE

Wall Street plunged almost 90 points at one stage yesterday as markets on both sides of the Atlantic fell sharply over fears that the US Federal Reserve would not cut interest rates today.

In London the FTSE 100 fell 46.5 points – the biggest drop since early October – to close at 3,596.1. At 90 points down, the Dow Jones staged its largest fall for five months.

The pound ended the day close to its all-time low of 82.2 on the Bank of England's trade-weighted exchange rate. It fell to 82.5 from 83 on Friday. Against the mark, it fell by 2 pence to 22.278.

Fears the US Fed will keep rates on hold led to a sell-off in US Treasuries. The benchmark US 30-year long bond fell by almost a point, taking its yield to 6.15 per cent. Gilts fell sharply, with the benchmark 10-year bond, losing half a point.

Market strategists said there were two explanations for the dramatic downturn. One was worries about the Fed not cutting rates because of the latest budget deadlock. The other suggested that the US mar-

kets, which have been storming ahead, had run out of steam.

"The markets are expressing displeasure with the lack of a budget pact," said Neil MacKinnon, currency strategist at Citibank.

But Mike Rosenberg, head of international fixed income at Merrill Lynch in New York, said: "The bond market has been setting itself up for correction – people had been getting a little too bullish on bonds."

Philip Isherwood, equity strategist at Kleinwort Benson, said: "The markets need a clear message on interest rates and the budget."

The latest round in the standoff between the Clinton administration and Republican Congress has deflated hopes that the key Federal Open Market Committee of the US central bank will cut rates when it meets today.

Alan Greenspan, chairman, has indicated that a budget deal would make it possible to cut the Fed Funds rate from its present level of 5.75 per cent. But the collapse of negotiations that led to a partial shutdown of the federal government has cast doubt on whether a rate cut will be forthcoming.

Despite the mayhem in the markets, there was still some optimism that rates might fall today. Mr Isherwood said: "On balance we still expect a rate cut that would lead to some sort of rally." Mr MacKinnon said: "I still think there's an outside chance the Fed could cut."

The dollar's weakening on the foreign exchanges was not helped by a smaller-than-expected reduction in Japan's trade surplus in November – at \$5.6bn, over \$1bn more than the \$4.6bn anticipated.

Japan's trade surplus dropped by almost a quarter in November compared with a year ago, with a particularly marked decline in the trade gap with the US. The decline occurred mainly because of rising imports of computers, aeroplanes and semiconductors from Asia.

Following the spectacular 42 per cent fall in October the year before, the market expectation had been for a bigger decline to \$5.4bn.

Imports in November rose by 11 per cent from a year earlier to \$28.8bn, while exports increased by 3 per cent to \$35.4bn. Imports from Asia ran at \$10.8bn, up 17 per cent

Leisure group comes up trumps with 16% improvement in spite of competition from scratch cards



Kurick lifted annual pre-tax profits before exceptional items by 16 per cent to £8.3m despite inroads by lottery scratch cards, according to Russell Smith, chief executive (left), chairman Clive Clague (centre) and John Jones, finance director. *Investment Column, page 20* Photograph: Jane Baker

OfTel plans £100m phone access plan

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

OfTel, the telecommunications watchdog, has proposed a £100m nation-wide fund to ensure access for everyone to the telephone network and a special low-cost deal for schools.

The move appears to leapfrog BT's agreement with the Labour party, announced in October, that it would connect all schools for free in return for assurances that it will be able to deliver broadcast entertainment

over the telephone wires. Under OfTel's proposals – part of a wider consultative document on "universal services" – schools would also be entitled to a specified level of service from BT or rival operators at an "affordable and predictable" price.

Don Cruickshank, director general of OfTel, said: "It does not need a deal between BT and the Government of the day. It is wrong in a market which is becoming competitive to lapse back into a monopolistic mechanism. This is the way to it."

Geoff Hoon, Labour's shadow technology spokesman, said that OfTel's plan is a welcome part of a wider debate on access for schools and universities to the information superhighway.

"We have an understanding with BT and that still stands. But the understanding is nothing new and not all that remarkable. The connection is after all the relatively easy part of the process – it is an enormous exercise to take a wire up a school drive and connect the school. What is important is what they

do with the connection." BT, however, accused the regulator of interfering. A spokesman said: "Our view is that until the market has failed, Mr Cruickshank should not interfere." BT did welcome the broader thrust of yesterday's proposals, which set out a mechanism for all operators to fund – or carry out – the provision of basic services throughout the UK, even where it is uneconomic to do so. At present the responsibility for universal services lies largely with BT.

The plan, which could ultimately result in slightly higher bills for the average customer, includes free selective call-barring for people who do not have a telephone for fear their bills would soar. It also envisages a service barring all but emergency or operator calls as an alternative to disconnection customers for non-payment.

Under OfTel's proposals, the cost of universal service would be met by a fund of up to £100m annually, about 1 per cent of basic telephony revenues.

Scots and Irish to merge US retail banking

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The Royal Bank of Scotland and Bank of Ireland announced the merger of their US community retail banks into an operation with combined assets worth £9.5bn (\$14.2bn).

Bank of Ireland's First Holdings Inc, which owns First New Hampshire Bank, is to be rolled into the bigger Citizens Financial Group of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The merger is the latest move in a surge of banking consolidations in the US as regional banks seek cost advantages in size.

The terms of the merger value the enlarged New England operation, which will continue under the Citizens name, at \$1.85bn. It will create the third largest commercial bank holding company in New England with 222 branches, focusing on consumer banking and lending to small- and medium-sized businesses.

"I think it is a very good deal for both banks. It makes a lot of sense to get together in what is effectively the same banking market. I reckon you could get rid of 12 per cent of the combined bank's costs, the equivalent of 40 per cent of the Bank of New Hampshire's cost base, just by centralising everything," said Hugh Pye, analyst at BZW.

Royal Bank of Scotland will hold 76.5 per cent of the enlarged operation. Bank of Ireland will receive stock representing 23.5 per cent of the merged entity valued at \$435m together with cash and loan notes with an estimated

value of \$220m which includes \$35m in respect of specified tax losses carried forward. It will also receive up to \$26m deferred cash consideration if other tax losses are realised in the future and will retain ownership of Bank Ireland First Financial, a small leasing subsidiary which has a book value of \$24m. Bank of Ireland will also nominate two members to the board of Citizens and will be represented on board committees.

Citizens Financial Group reported pre-tax profit in the year to September of \$170m, and Bank of Ireland First Holdings profits of \$32m in the six months to September.

The earnings of the enlarged bank will be substantially increased by synergy benefits, mainly cost savings as the support functions of Citizens and First Holdings are combined in areas such as head office and technology. Additional benefits will come from sharing product development, marketing expenditure and technology investment.

Mr Pye added: "I think there is a good chance of the combined bank increasing revenues by 5 per cent, getting pre-tax profits up by \$80m, which would add between 3 and 5 per cent to the earnings per share of both banks. Together the banks will enjoy a very strong market share, either to carry on with or to sell at a later stage."

George Mathewson, Royal Bank chief executive, said: "This is a good deal. It will bring strategic and financial benefits to both of us. It will increase our earnings per share without the need to add new capital."

Overseas investment in UK falls

PAUL WALLACE

British firms invested three times as much overseas in 1994 as foreign companies invested in the UK. There was a particularly sharp fall in direct investment into the UK from companies in North America.

Total investments overseas are calculated by the Central Statistical Office to have amounted to £18.5bn, £2bn more than its earlier estimate. Meanwhile, the CSO has revised down its estimate of inward investment by £500m to £6.1bn.

The geographical breakdown for 1994, available for the first time, shows that the US con-

tinues to be the country attracting the most investment from the UK. In 1994, it accounted for 28 per cent of total investment. The next largest recipient was the Netherlands, with 13 per cent, followed by Australia with 10 per cent.

British companies stepped up their overseas investments in 1994 by almost £2bn. But the big increase was to countries outside the European Union and North America, where direct investment by British companies almost doubled. The increase to Latin America was particularly marked. By contrast, investment to the EU fell 10 per cent and to North America by 32 per cent. Inward investment fell

over a third to £6.1bn, its lowest since 1986. In 1989 and 1990, it was running at three times that level.

The geographical breakdown showed investment from North America plunging from £5.2bn in 1993 to £1.8bn. However, investment from countries in the EU rose from £1.7bn to £3.3bn.

In the first half of 1995, British companies have again increased their investments overseas, which are running at an annual rate of £23bn. However, there has been a recovery in inward investment, which is running at an annual rate of £14bn.

The importance of sustaining such a recovery is not in doubt.

According to the DTI, 40 per cent of manufacturing exports come from foreign-owned enterprises. Overseas companies account for 18 per cent of all manufacturing jobs and a third of net capital expenditure.

The problem Britain faces is one of increasing competition. Other countries in the EU are making much more active efforts to attract inward investment and the EU itself is facing competition from central and Eastern countries.

According to *Regions of the New Europe*, a study by Ernst & Young, 20 per cent of investment in Europe is being directed to countries of the former Eastern bloc.

Airbus raided in \$5m 'bribes' investigation

A bribery scandal surrounding Airbus Industrie deepened yesterday after German investigators raided company offices and the homes of former directors and associates, writes Russell Hotten.

The authorities are looking into alleged kickbacks to top Canadian politicians – including former prime minister Brian Mulroney – to secure the sale of Airbus A320 aircraft worth \$1.8bn to Air Canada in 1983.

One of the raids was said to have been on the home of Karlheinz Schreiber – a former aide to Franz-Josef Strauss, the former prime minister of Bavaria and Airbus supervisory board chairman, who died in 1988. Also targeted, according to German reports, were offices of Thyssen Industries and a home owned by Holger Pfahls, a former Defence Ministry official.

Airbus is a consortium which brings together British Aero-

space and companies in France, Germany, Spain and Italy. It was unclear yesterday exactly why the bribery allegations should be emanating from Germany. A spokesman for Airbus said the claims were "totally unsubstantiated".

Mr Mulroney is already suing Canada's government and police for linking him to the kick-back claims. Mr Schreiber also denied the allegations. German federal prosecutors believe Mr Schreiber paid Mr Mulroney and other Canadian politicians about \$5m to secure the Airbus deal, according to reports.

No charges have been filed in Germany, Canada or Switzerland, where other reports said Mr Schreiber set up bank accounts for Frank Moores, former premier of the Canadian province of Newfoundland, and a second unidentified Canadian politician. Mr Moores has denied any wrongdoing.

IN BRIEF

Ovens chief collects \$1m

Berisford, the Magnet kitchens company, paid \$1.1m to Marion Antonini, chief executive of Welbilt – the US ovens maker – when it acquired the company in January. Mr Antonini received the payment even though he remains chief executive of the company which makes catering equipment. He was also paid \$590,000 last year, more than Bersford's chief executive Alan Bowkett, who received £340,000. "He's American and he's paid an American rate for the job," the company said.

RICS looks for upturn in housing market

Activity in the housing market is expected to pick up in the New Year after a pause over Christmas, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors said yesterday. The institution's three-month survey to the end of November showed that three quarters of estate agents saw no change in house prices and 20 per cent saw a fall.

Sir Richard stays at M&S

Sir Richard Greenbury is to remain chairman of Marks & Spencer for at least three years. But Sir Richard, 59, says he will step down by 2001 when he will be 65. There had been speculation that Sir Richard might become non-executive chairman. M&S would not comment yesterday on a possible successor.

Banker to lead Gas talks

British Gas has appointed Kenneth Gardener, a director of Charterhouse Bank, to renegotiate its long-term contracts with North Sea producers which are forcing the company to buy more gas than it can sell at present.

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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN
Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Cadbury's chocolate-coated deal

Cadbury Schweppes's soft drinks division has hogged the headlines for the company this year. January's £1.1bn deal to buy the remainder of Dr Pepper transformed the group's drinks interests and made Cadbury a credible number three in the US market behind Coca-Cola and Pepsi.

But while the soft drinks market offers the more spectacular opportunities, the confectionery division offers steady growth, too. Yesterday's £108m deal to buy the Canadian business, Neilson Cadbury, underlines the group's strategy to hoist itself up the worldwide confectionery league. The top places are held by Nestlé, Mars and then Philip Morris which owns Jacob Suchard. Cadbury is in the tier below along with Hershey of the US.

Cadbury may have a wish list of big targets such as Ferrero of Italy or Lindt of Switzerland. But if these prove elusive it can still put on muscle with a series of smaller deals like this one in Canada. It is growing organically by investing in younger markets such as Russia, Poland and Argentina.

Cadbury already has Canadian links through its Trebor division but with this deal it is buying back an old cast-off spruced up under different owners.

Cadbury sold its Canadian interests to Neilson in 1987 but retained a royalty agreement. It bailed out then because the market was ultra-competitive and the business was performing poorly. It is now buying back a bigger, stronger business that has Cadbury and Neilson product ranges and an improved manufacturing system with a lower cost base.

There is solid logic to this deal. In June, Cadbury acquired Allan Candy, one of Canada's biggest confectionery companies. With the Neilson business bolted on, Cadbury will be market leader in Canadian confectionery ahead of Nestlé and Mars. The market is still competitive as last year's profits of £5m on sales of £109m testify. But there should be benefits from running the Allan Candy and Neilson businesses together.

The deal adds to Cadbury Schweppes's debt mountain which stood at £1.4bn at the half-year stage in September, giving gearing of 100 per cent. Cadbury says it is using debt to pay for the deal, though a share placing cannot be ruled out.

Cadbury Schweppes shares have enjoyed strong growth this year rising by more than 50 per cent to 547p, up 0.5p yesterday.

That growth has put the shares on a forward rating of over 16, a premium to the market. But with analysts forecasting profits of £525m this year and £625 next year the shares are a decent hold.

Chiroscience in Medeva tie-up

Shares in the "biotech babes" had done well this year even before British Biotech's were sent soaring by last month's announcement of a potential breakthrough in the treatment of cancer. Chiroscience, a leader in so-called chiral chemistry, is no exception, but the roller-coaster nature of the sector was well-illustrated by yesterday's announcement of a co-development deal with Medeva. Having more than tripled from around 100p this year, the shares fell back 25p to 339p on the news.

The market did not have very much to go on, as neither company would even reveal which drug was involved or which side it belonged to. But the rationale behind the fall in the shares was presumably that Chiroscience is

about to give something away by letting Medeva in on the act.

That looks wide of the mark. Yesterday's deal is most likely to relate to methylphenidate. Medeva's controversial treatment for hyperactivity in children, known as "attention deficit disorder" in the US. Facing the prospect of competition in 1997 from Johnson Matthey, which is developing a rival generic version of the drug, Medeva is no doubt looking to add some bells and whistles to its product, which is presumably where Chiroscience's chiral speciality comes in.

This branch of chemistry studies the ability to isolate isomers of existing drugs, making them purer and potentially less prone to causing side-effects. Applying that science to methylphenidate could allow Medeva to clean up in what could be a £220m market in the US. A 10 per cent royalty on those sales would net Chiroscience potentially £20m. Even if the new drug is no more than a fine extension of the existing drug, it could pull in more royalties than Chiroscience's entire £1.7m turnover for last year.

There should be plenty of further news flow to keep investors happy in the new year. D3967, a treatment for

breast cancer, goes into clinical trials in February, when there should also be further details of the Medeva deal. But, "burning" cash at the rate of £1.1m a month, Chiroscience will need to raise more money soon as its cash balances last August were only £21m. Given Yamaichi's net asset value estimate of 520p a share, the company should have little difficulty raising the cash, but the shares remain speculative.

Kunick a good recovery bet

Kunick yesterday laid to rest the joke that the 10p tokens paid out of its Bell Fruit gaming machines were a more valuable currency than the company's shares. Sent reeling by the recession, Kunick is now one of the least risky recovery plays in the leisure sector.

Profits before tax for the year to 30 September, announced yesterday, grew from £7.1m to £8.3m – a stark contrast to the river of red ink that flowed from the accounts three years ago. Despite the continuing impact of the National Lottery, further, solid growth is on the cards this year, with deregulation allowing fruit machines into betting shops. If everything goes to plan there will be upwards of 12,000 fruit machines in bookies this time next year.

If Kunick can lay claim to 25 per cent of that market, through deals with the likes of Ladbrokes, the rewards will be handsome. Analysts reckon 3,000 machines could equate to £1m a year of profits.

On top of gaming, Kunick has another nice little earner in the form of a 50 per cent share in Finagast, the nursing homes business which could be floated off as early as 1997. With luck that will make up for a sharp downturn in consumer spending in France which has hit that country's operations hard.

All told, the existing businesses, a joint venture with Allied Domecq to develop 20,000 sq ft leisure complexes and a move into the management of local authority leisure facilities should see group taxable profits climb to £10.5m this year.

The shares have soared 70 per cent this year to almost 24p, but still look to have a way to run. Prospective earnings per share of 1.67p give a p/e of 14.2, and a dividend of 0.7p to follow this year's 0.6p gives a gross yield of 3.7 per cent. Good value.

Simon Pincombe CITY DIARY

Cloakroom-and-dagger saga raises few cheers



The telephone rings. It is Gwendoline Lamb (above), the world's unluckiest investor (so you know it to be a serious matter). The Middlesbrough Mistral calls to remind us that this is her 14th Christmas on sardines since her flagship investment vehicle, the Savings & Investment Bank, went belly-up on the Isle of Man. As ever, the focus of her formidable ire is Coopers & Lybrand, the liquidators of the crashed bank, which she claims is still sitting on £1.8m of investors' money. "I am still in the same position and Michael Jordan [the then senior partner of the Coopers insolvency arm] retired a year ago," she bellows.

Neither has the news that the liquidators are selling land in Portugal gone down well in the Lamb household. "They are out there enjoying themselves at my expense," she roars.

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IN BRIEF

Ivory & Sime 'rebuilding foundations'

Ivory & Sime, the Edinburgh-based fund manager, said it expected full-year profits to be broadly similar to last year. The company said it was rebuilding solid foundations that augured well for the future. It saw funds under management rise 19 per cent to £3.7bn in the six months to April. The figure included an extra £339m from the acquisition of Clan Asset Management and Baronessmad Group. Despite the additional funds, pre-tax profits fell from £3.1m to £2.95m, although the dividend is raised from 2.25p to 2.5p.

Pressure on Crest margins eases

Crest Packaging said pressures on margins were easing with the stabilisation of raw material prices. Trading conditions remain tough, but the company is looking forward with increasing confidence. Pre-tax profits fell from £1.38m to £1.07m in the 26 weeks to 28 October, but the interim dividend is held at 1.375p.

Black & Edgington rights issue

Black & Edgington, the former tent hire and camping equipment group, has written to shareholders explaining its plans to convert into a pharmaceuticals company. To be renamed SkyPharma, Black will pay between £12m and £27m for Krypton, a Gibraltar-based drug development firm. The deal will be part-financed by a one-for-four rights issue at 4p to raise £9.5m.

Perkins nets £11m from shellfish sales

Perkins Foods announced a £10.9m deal to sell its UK shellfish businesses to The Seafood Company, a venture backed by Phil Drew Ventures. The two subsidiaries, Anchor Seafoods and The Cromer Crab Company, import and process frozen and chilled shellfish. The equity is being sold for £6.7m, with the balance of the deal relating to debt.

Confident Brasway doubles profits

Brasway, the hydraulic hose maker to industrial oils blender, has seen a recent slowing of orders in its main European business. However, it says the underlying outlook and order book around the world remains good. It unveiled a more than doubling in pre-tax profits to £1.05m in the year to 28 October, from £505,000 before. The interim dividend rises 17 per cent to 0.28p.

Century Inns trades today

Shares in Century Inns start trading on the stock market today some 10 months later than scheduled. Just over 20 million shares were placed at 120p last week, valuing the biggest independent pub trader in the north of England at £47.4m.

Takeover rumours sour the big Apple

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Speculation over the future of Apple and its embattled boss Michael Spindler is rife once more after gloomy warnings from the company that it may be facing an unprecedented loss in the quarter ending 31 December.

The forecast has reinforced the belief of analysts that Apple may soon be forced to seek a buyer to survive and that Mr Spindler's bumpy five-year tenure as chief executive may soon be terminated.

Meanwhile Mr Spindler has hinted that he may enact a savage job-cutting programme in an attempt to revive Apple, with some analysts predicting that as many as 1,300 positions, or 7.4 per cent of the workforce, may be slashed.

Mr Spindler said the company, which has around 10 per

cent of the US market, was reviewing all of its operations and "will take appropriate actions to address the challenges".

Apple has never before made a loss in its first fiscal quarter, which includes the pre-Christmas retail period when computer sales should be at their most robust. In August, the company initiated price cuts of up to 40 per cent in a risky bid to build sales and market share.

As Apple's fortunes deteriorate, and the price of its shares dips, so anticipation of a buy-out is heightened. By the same token, however, the takeover buzz is protecting Apple shares against any sudden free-fall.

There have been rumours for months about a takeover of the company, with the most likely suitors ranging from IBM, which collaborated with Apple on developing the PowerPC computer chip, to Oracle, Sony of Japan and Motorola.

From growth pause to recession

The markets yesterday were glum about the US budget paralysis, but maybe they should have been glum about something else. One of the best questions to ask if you want to peer ahead into the economic future is always: what is the surprise? What is the thing which we ought to have spotted at least as a possibility, but which hardly anyone has yet noticed?

I have a candidate. It is that the pause in US growth which is clearly taking place at the moment might turn into something worse, maybe even a recession.

To explain. Look around the world and there are clear signs almost everywhere of slowing growth. Only yesterday the German government warned of slower growth there. Last week Kenneth Clarke acknowledged that UK growth this year would be below the figure in the budget forecast a couple of weeks earlier. Japan continues without any real recovery at all. And while growth in France has been creeping upwards, latest estimates are being downgraded again.

But there is a big difference between slower growth, even the very slow growth dubbed in the US as a "growth recession", and none at all. For most people, that is not yet on the screen. If, however, there is to be another world-wide recession – and some day there will inevitably be one – then the most likely place for it to start would be the US, simply because the US is furthest along the cyclical path. It has had the longest period of expansion, having been growing steadily for about five years.

What triggered my own

ECONOMIC VIEW
HAMISH McRAE

awareness of the danger of recession was a paper by Lacy Hunt, the chief US economist at HSBC Markets. The HSBC thesis is that the various measures of economic activity have all been falling on a year-on-year basis for upwards of 12 months. They are not yet negative and may not become so. But this sort of downward trend has in the past been followed either by a growth recession or by full-blown recession.

The baseline prediction is

by the time the figures are published the view has become mainstream. There is some. For example, when the bank's team has been visiting US clients in the last few days, they find that their own perception of a marked slowdown is echoed by the senior executives to whom they are making their presentation.

The key question, though, is not so much how marked the slowdown in the next six months, but rather the capaci-

ty of the US economy to stage a rebound in the second half of next year. What might support such a rebound? It won't be public spending, for there are tax rises in the pipeline and the budget impasse, however it is resolved, will surely lead to greater tightening of fiscal policy.

Meanwhile the budget problem remains unresolved, which may delay any interest rate cuts the Fed would like to bring in. If not public spending, what about exports? On a ten year view US export performance has been impressive, but the export sector is still too small to make a material impact on the growth of the economy as a whole, even if the two main US markets, Canada and Mexico, were performing strongly, which they are not.

No, it will, as usual in the US, be up to the consumer to pull the economy along. Consumers have to be prepared to carry on piling up debt, and the Fed has to cut rates to reduce the burden of the debt they have already accumulated. If it does not do so, or if (in the absence of a budget deal) rates were to rise, recession would be virtually guaranteed.

Conclusion? It is always useful to have the extreme view set out in a logical manner, if only because that gives one a point of reference from which to disagree. Up to now most of us here in Britain have been much more worried about the dangers of a slowdown across Continental Europe than of one in the US. As a working assumption we should at least not take the US economy for granted, and be aware that the danger of a new world recession starting there is at least as great as one starting in Europe.

I do not think at this stage there is enough evidence to go much beyond that. Slow growth, between 1 and 2 per cent, is more likely than no growth. But no-one should expect the US to give much help to the world economy during the next few months. It is no longer the locomotive. Finally, in so far as the recent heady performance of the US stock market depends on reasonable continued growth in the economy, expect at best a pause there too.

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market report/shares

TAKING STOCK

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year



No sign of the festive spirit as Footsie takes a dive

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100	3596.1	-46.5
FT-SE 250	3954.0	-5.8
FT-SE 350	1787.7	-18.7
SEQ VOLUME	662.4	shares
27,456	bargains	
Gifts Index	95.93	-0.17

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



The festive spirit was sadly absent from the stock market with the FT-SE 100 index crashing 46.5 points to 3,596.1. The fall, the steepest since October, was largely on the back of New York where, in scenes of utter confusion, computer problems delayed the opening for an hour and the Dow Jones Average was once almost 90 points lower.

New York's basic anxiety was fuelled by the Budget stand-off which is seen as ruling out any further interest rate cuts for the time being.

The latest decline puts in jeopardy the traditional Christmas rally. In recent years the Footsie has scored spectacular progress in the run up to Christmas with prices surging ahead in trading.

The very paucity of trading created much of the cheer. It took little action to produce exaggerated price movements

with, for example, Footsie jumping more than 100 points ahead of Christmas last year. Although blue chips edged ahead for the first four days of last week they gave up much of their gains on Friday and yesterday's decline means Footsie has fallen 75.5 points in two trading days.

Even last week's high flying take over favourites came down to earth with a thump. Royal Bank of Scotland, which duly lined up its US deal with Bank of Ireland, lost 23p to 58p and Bank of Scotland 22p to 284.5p. National Westminster Bank, with its US disposal expected to be announced this week, gave up 23.5p to 629.5p.

Other financials were also hit, with the once bid-happy insurance shares giving ground. GRE fell 10.5p to 259p.

Airtours, the holiday group which last week produced profits in line with market

forecasts - and is now warning of a holiday shortage next year - gained 13p to 352p but First Choice, due to report today, stuck at 64p as the market braced itself for a dismal showing.

Ladbroke was one where takeover rumours stuck. But even the betting and hotel group needed a new name in the frame to remain on the right side. The shares earned 3.5p to 153.5p as Whitbread replaced Bass - the long rumoured bidder - as the front runner.

The story could draw support from Whitbread's hotel ambitions. In August the brewing group splashed out £180m

on the 16 Marston hotels in the UK. Ladbroke's international spread of Hilton hotels would be a welcome addition to the Whitbread chain - but it could find it difficult to reconcile the Marriott and Hilton managements.

Bookie Gas Carter rose 3p to 58p. It said that it had held talks with rivals Stanley Leisure and others but "no firm intention" to bid had been made.

Next, the retailer, ignored the gloom, gaining 1p to 468p. The interest rate outlook and reports of improved high street trading in the Christmas run up helped. But the old story of a link with Great Uni-

versal Stores is never far below the surface. GUS put on 4p to 673p.

The big babes had, not surprisingly, a difficult session but British Biotech jumped 112p to 1,720p. Chiroscience, duly confirming its pact with the drugs group, Medeva, fell 25p to 330p.

SelectTV, ahead of the expected Pearson bid, gained 2p to 30p but Amec, awaiting the result of the Norwegian offer, gave up 3p to 93p.

Cray Electronic tumbled 6.5p to 40.5p after further consideration of last week's results and high flyer Tesco lost 44p to 842p as profit-takers moved in.

Norcross, the building materials group, gained 4p to 84p. The hard pressed group is thought to be on the verge of selling its packaging and printing side.

Viewline, the latest AIM recruit, reached 135p against a

100p placing. The company has developed the technology which allows television sets and telephone lines to act as information and communication terminals.

Tele-Cine Cell, providing production and special effects facilities, tumbled 26p to 72p after warning of lower profits. The shares were floated two years ago at 170p.

English National, an investment company, edged forward 1p to 46p. The shares have climbed from 34p this month. The trust is under new management and there is talk of some intriguing overseas involvement. It is suggested that Joseph Lewis, the Bahamas-based investor who has built a 25.32 per cent shareholding in auctioneer Christie's International, has taken a stake.

Sims Foods, up 2p at 35p, reflected hopes of a bid from the Whitbread food group.

Blage, the builders merchant expected to evolve as a media group, could be near to completing its first deal since the arrival of Chris Akers - a former corporate financier at Swiss Bank Corporation. It is thought that the long-running talks to acquire FreePress, a rival to BT's Talking Pages, have at last reached a conclusion and details will be known this week. Blage's shares are likely to be suspended while the deal goes through. They closed at 16p.

Ingham, which once had ambitions to become a mini-conglomerate, now sees its future as an investment trust with an injection planned at 36p a share. It is in talks to sell its worst spinning side and will presumably also dispose of its car parts and property operations. The shares are 37p.

SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: Ex rights & dividends - Ex-ill - Unlisted Securities Market - A Supplement on Fully Paid up Nil Paid Shares

Source: Financial

THE INDEPENDENT INDEX

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Scag, Simply dial 0800 123 315, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

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UK Stock Market Report 01 Bullion Report 05 Water Shares 34
UK Company News 02 Wall St Report 30 Biotechnology Shares 40
Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Banks 41

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Call cost 30p per minute (weekdays), and 40p on all other times. Call charges include VAT

MARKET LEADERS: TOP 20 VOLUMES

Stock	Vol/1000	Stock	Vol/1000	Stock	Vol/1000
Bank	34,000	National Grid	8,100	Nextcare Bank	5,600
BT	10,000	Burleigh	7,500	ASDA Group	4,700
Vodafone	8,800	Barclays	6,500	Landis	4,500
Telecom	6,800	British Telecom	5,000	Bank of Scotland	4,500
British Gas	5,500	British Airways	4,500	Smith Barney	4,200

FT-SE 100 INDEX HOUR BY HOUR

Open 3542.1 down 0.5	11.00 3530.3 down 12.3	14.00 3615.4 down 20.2
09.00 3541.2 down 1.4	12.00 3528.8 down 15.8	15.00 3612.4 down 32.2
10.00 3530.4 down 12.2	13.00 3527.2 down 15.4	16.00 3592.3 down 40.5
		18.00 3591.1 down 41.7

BANKS, MERCHANT

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

BANKS, RETAIL

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

BREWERIES

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

ENGINEERING VEHICLES

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

INSURANCE

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

INTERNATIONALS

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

LEISURE & HOTELS

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

OTHER FINANCIAL

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

OTHER SERVICES

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

PHARMACEUTICALS

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

PROPERTY

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

PRINTING & PAPER

Stock	Price	Change	Vol
Bank of Ireland	58p	-23p	100
Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
National Westminster	629.5p	-23.5p	100
Royal Bank of Scotland	64p	0p	100
First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100
Stanley Leisure	468p	+1p	100
Viewline	135p	+0p	100

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Bank of Scotland	284.5p	-22p	100
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Viewline	135p	+0p	100

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First Choice	352p	+13p	100
Ladbroke	153.5p	+3.5p	100
Bookie Gas Carter	58p	+3p	100

Doberman rides

[illegible][illegible]

Dunwoody on a high back from the edge

Richard Edmondson finds a growing contentment in the champion jockey

It was horsemanship that would have been appreciated from the Calgary stamper to Argentina's polo fields and the Cossack plains of old Russia.

When Richard Dunwoody forced Unguided Missile's lolling head in front on the line at Ascot on Saturday it completed a ride that was a triumph for all that the jockey had learned in his years in the saddle. It was also victory for the renaissance Dunwoody, who has looked away the stern figure of old for a more joyous existence.

Balance has long been the jockey's greatest ally, and he employed this to maximum effect on Saturday when Unguided Missile negotiated the last open ditch as tanks used to take on hedgerows in northern France. Dunwoody maintained the partnership before achieving the greatest escape since our chaps started depositing earth down the inside of their trousers.

"Someone said I'd lost an iron, but I hadn't, otherwise I'd have fallen off," he recalled. "What happened was that the saddle slipped quite badly and if it had stayed where it was, down on one side, I would have pulled up. But I was going so well that I was able to spend a few strides using my body weight to get it back into place, but I only got it back to a certain extent."

Dunwoody was therefore hampered over the next two obstacles by a shifting seat and at the last by a mistake from his partner, who slipped and adopted the posture of a burrowing rodent. Yet he still got back up

"I could get up to a journalist's weight quickly. As it is now, the bootman told me I'd put on an inch round my calf muscles"

to win. "All credit to the horse," he said, yet all the jockey credits this season have been flowing the way of Thomas Richard Dunwoody MBE.

It seems odd to relate that nearly 12 months ago he was almost lost to National Hunt racing. The self-absorption it takes to become a champion jockey had taken Dunwoody to the edge of the ravine. His body was moaning from the constant wailing, his marriage was in tatters (the husband will tell you he was no cherub in this relationship) and the word retirement came flickering into his head.

That the knuckles of the sport's competitive element was squeezing the life out of Dunwoody was exemplified one January day this year at Uttoxeter, where he ran Luke Harvey, a pal of his, off the track. There followed a 30-day suspension and the stirring of unused cogs in Dunwoody's mind.

The Irish trainer Barry Kelly, a good friend, had just died in a road accident and Dunwoody immersed himself in travel, riding work for Paddy Rodkin in Dubai, and going skiing. When he put the key in the lock on his return home he

found, for the first time in his sporting life, that there was no immediate urge to get equipment out and ready himself for competition.

Dunwoody decided to trim the schedule, expand his waist and, most staggeringly of all, relinquish the post as Martin Pipe's stable rider, a job that was virtually handed out to the jockey's championship. "I'd had it in the back of my mind for a few years to stick up the weight and ride more when it suited," he said. "It just came round sooner than I'd anticipated."

The one factor that helps is that he is not rushing around every day. You can't expect to be at your best if you're doing it day in day out, wasting and getting falls. How could you physically be at your best in that situation? To be a champion jockey you can't ride like a man.

"I could get up to a journalist's weight very quickly and, as it is now, the bootman told me I'd put on an extra inch round my calf muscles when he was measuring me for this year."

The result of the new regime was being staggering. While the jockey is too proud of a man to concede that this new-found sanguine approach has improved his riding but there are busloads around to disagree with him. At the age of 31, and finally at peace with himself, many believe Richard Dunwoody is in the best form of his life.

Dunwoody is not going to win a fourth championship this season he has become the man to follow blindly in the neon events. If the 0898 or hopeful envelope brigade need a system to advocate it should be to follow Dunwoody's Saturday special. Before this weekend he had recorded memorable successes on the Irish-trained Sound Man and Merry Gale.

His decision to return more regularly to his homeland has coincided with an era when the leaves are returning to a once near-barren tree of the sport over the water. "I like having winners in Ireland and there are decent horses these days," he said. "There are as many owners over there now in search of a top-class horse as in England, if not more. The Irish scene on the whole is pretty healthy."

The impact of these winning moments is also evident. In days before, Dunwoody finished a job, even a winning one, with the look of a drained commuter propped up by fellow travellers in a tube train. Now each victorious ride appears to be greeted with a grateful slap to the conveyance and an expansive smile which shows the damage his trade has done. He looks like Dracula in a blood bank.

The jockey is too proud of a man to concede that this new-found sanguine approach has improved his riding but there are busloads around to disagree with him. At the age of 31, and finally at peace with himself, many believe Richard Dunwoody is in the best form of his life.



At ease rider: Dunwoody has thrived at a slower pace

Photograph: Ed Byrne

Lindsay chairman of Super League

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

Maurice Lindsay, the chief executive of the Rugby League, has been elected as the first chairman of the Super League International Board.

Lindsay was named as the inaugural officer of a highly influential office at a meeting at which the new board was formed in Sydney this weekend. The former Wigan chairman, chief executive of the game in Britain for three years, was widely tipped to take on the new role. The only individual of comparable stature, the Australian John Ribot, is Super League's first chief executive officer.

Lindsay, who will also be the British delegate, will retain his role as chief executive of the British game, although the two functions will clearly overlap to a large extent. "I am absolutely thrilled and delighted with the appointment," Lindsay said.

"Having spent a lifetime in the game and been so heavily involved in international rugby league for so many years, I am very excited. John and I share the same values and belief that our game has been world sport's best kept secret for far too long."

The formation of the new board pushes the Australian Rugby League, which is locked in a legal battle, further into isolation. Among the functions of the new body will be controlling the laws of the game, including deciding whether the changes being tried in Britain will be adopted by Super League-aligned nations worldwide.

The Pennine League side, West Bowling, who produced the shock of the second round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup on Saturday by beating one of the leading amateur clubs, Wigan St. Patricks, have been rewarded with a trip to Carlisle in the third round. The round, the first stage at which Second Division professional clubs enter the competition, features one all-professional tie, with Doncaster going to Barrow. West Hull, who beat Blackpool Gladiators in the second round, have every chance of making it through to the next round, in which the big guns make their first appearances. They have been drawn to play at Highfield, the bottom club in the Second Division.

Gondonso gives Simon three in a row

Equestrianism

GENEVIEVE MURPHY

Hugo Simon's return to the Olympia Show Jumping Championships, in which he last competed 10 years ago, became even more euphoric when the 53-year-old Australian gained his third victory of the meeting yesterday.

Simon's win on Gondonso in the Snowman Six Bar was particularly satisfying in that he had never ridden the horse in a competition until he brought him to this meeting. The eight-year-old jumped the only clear of the contest's fourth round, when the last in a straight line of five fences stood at 6ft 1in. Second place was shared by three riders: Ireland's European champion, Peter Charles, on Blue Bayu, John Whitaker on Everest Randi and the Dutchman Wout-Jan van der Schans on Elpasia.

Michael Whitaker also extended his tally to three wins yesterday when the remarkable 17-year-old speed specialist, Everest, defeated the Olympic champion, Ludger Beerbaum, on Sprehe II's Me.

Guy Gossens, a 21-year-old Warwickshire rider, had put his name into the record books when evening Sunday night's P&O Events Puissance on Sagrat. In the process he cleared the red wall when it stood at a massive 7ft 4in.

Dobbin rides Man

Gordon Richards has scotched speculation that Richard Dunwoody will replace his stable jockey, Toby Dobbin, aboard One Man in the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day.

Dobbin returned to action at Caterick on Friday after 24 days' off with a dislocated shoulder, torn ligaments and a broken bone in his left thumb. He was on the sidelines when Mark Dwyer partnered One Man to victory at Haydock earlier in the month, but yesterday Richards gave Dobbin his full backing.

"Toby is fine and is riding at Edgely today, and as long as he is 100 per cent fit he will ride One Man," he said. "I have always admired Richard and I have always used him. He has ridden for me for years and can ride for me any time, but I have always admired Ron Barry and Jonjo O'Neill too, and they won't be getting the ride either."

Montelado leads discharged

Dates when the leading Champion Hurdle contenders can be discharged from the casualty wards are becoming clearer and it seems that Montelado will be the first one on track when he runs in the Christmas Hurdle at Kempton next week.

Richard Dunwoody, who had been booked to ride Montelado at Fairyhouse this month, when the talented but injury-plagued horse was pulled out because of a cold, will be in the plate.

Williamson boost

The reigning champion, Alderbrook, is on course to make his return in the Kingwell Hurdle at Wincanton on 22 February, the race in which he staked his claim for the hurdling crown last season.

"He has been cantering for two and a half weeks," Kim Bailey, his trainer, said. "While it's still early days, he seems fine."

Norman Williamson is pinning his hopes on an X-ray examination early in the New Year to determine when he can start preparing for a return to the saddle.

Out of action since breaking his right femur in a fall at Sedgfield in October, he has been fired by reports on the progress of Alderbrook and his Cheltenham Gold Cup winning ride, Master Oats.

"I wouldn't mind if I was as fit as them," Williamson said yesterday. "Everything is going well and I have been cycling in the gym. But only after the leg is X-rayed again will I have a comeback date."

Williamson plans to spend Christmas in his native Ireland where he has been working as a racing summariser for RTE. As a result he will be at Leopardstown on 28 December when Master Oats is scheduled to run in the Ericsson Chase.

SOUTHWELL

12.45 ARCTIC LIFE (map) 2.15 Fictitious Secretary
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12.45 WATERLOO NATIONAL HUNT NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,800 added 2m 2.15 Fictitious Secretary
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1.15 TRAFALGAR NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £4,000 added 2m 41.70 Penalty Value £2,946
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LINGFIELD

12.00 SANITARY 12.30 IMPINGTON 1.00 CHEEKY CHIPPY 1.30 FRESH FRUIT 2.00 NO SPOONERS (map) 2.30 TIME CLASH 3.00 BROUGHTONS FORMULA

12.00 THIN RED LINE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV 1) £4,550 added 7f (AW)
12.00 THIN RED LINE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV 1) £4,550 added 7f (AW)

1.00 BIRMINGHAM HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,650 added 5f (AW)
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RACING RESULTS

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sport

Nigel Starmer-Smith and Bill Beaumont in tandem are a disgrace because of the tone of unremitting English chauvinism

Rereading Jack Rowell's comments before and after Saturday's match. I am beginning to wonder whether he is the man for the job. This is not, I should make clear at the outset, primarily a question of England's performance under his stewardship — though that certainly comes into it. It is more a matter of the way in which he regards his post.

He seems to think of himself as running an amateur team for the love of it, and to want to be judged accordingly. He wishes the team to be judged similarly. Paradoxically, his predecessor Geoff Cooke fitted more comfortably into the mould of a professional manager: somewhat taciturn; very much a players' man; unemotional, at any rate on the surface.

Rowell gives the impression of

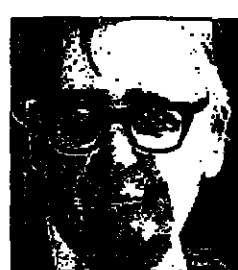
being an altogether more sensitive soul. "Love me" he seems to cry. "Or, if you cannot bring yourselves to do that, then at least try to understand."

It would not be much good to anybody if a surgeon, say, carried on in this way. We should not place great trust in an airline pilot who sent out a similar message to his passengers in mid-flight. Rugby himself would not have expected charity in those assessing the commercial performance of Dalgely Foods when he was part of the higher direction of that enterprise.

Rugby union football is not like a commercial firm. But it is more like one than it was at the beginning of the season. It is not entitled to automatic loyalty if it does not produce the goods.

Rowell complained about the booing of Paul Grayson when he was about to take his umpteenth penalty kick at goal. But it was not Grayson that was being booed. Nor was it — as some commentators have suggested — the whole England performance thus far, disappointing though this had been. It was rather the correct decision, which was Will Carling's responsibility, to take a kick at goal rather than a tapped penalty.

I have heard booing at Twickenham in the same circumstances on previous occasions, notably when Japan played an England XV some years ago. In that match the sound, accompanied by idiotic cries of "run it", derived from a contempt for the visiting side. On Saturday the boos' hope was that they



ALAN WATKINS
on rugby

would see something of what they had paid for. In this sense the English performance was indeed being booed.

Rowell had better become used to the noise. It will recur, even if England play better than they did

against Western Samoa. For one thing, the audience are as entitled to express their dissatisfaction as they are at La Scala, Milan. And, for another, the crowds who now assemble at Twickenham to belt out *God Save The Queen* and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* — more convincingly, it must be said, than my fellow-countrymen now render their own half-remembered hymns — seem to have only the haziest acquaintance with the game. Just as they do not realise that it is criminal to throw away three points, so they cannot understand the new put-in law.

But, whether the sport is professional or not, one has always been entitled to expect professional standards from television commentators, and to criticise

them accordingly. They are being paid for their work, even if they do not make their entire livings through it.

Nigel Starmer-Smith and Bill Beaumont in tandem are a disgrace. They are so not because of technical errors on their part, whether to do with rugby or broadcasting skills — and there are certainly a few of these — but, rather, because of the tone of unremitting English chauvinism which they feel constrained to adopt. They are reminiscent of British Movietone or Pathe newsreaders of the 1940s and early 1950s.

No one watching Saturday afternoon's broadcasts who was unimpressed by the tone of the two commentators would have understood from the two commentators

just how badly England were performing. "He'll be a bit disappointed with that one," was the furthest Beaumont was prepared to go in adverse criticism.

Nor am I at all happy about the use of Rob Andrew as a summariser. Not only is he yet a third English voice. He is up to his eyeballs in the contemporary game, both as a player and as a manager.

Andrew is a nice chap, a distinguished player and — let there be no doubt about it — a person of the utmost integrity. That is not the point. The point is that someone employed by the BBC to do his kind of job must not only be above the present battle, over payments, contracts, player-poaching and the rest of it. He must manifestly be seen to be above the battle.

S Africans put Adams on agenda

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Durban
South Africa 225
England 152-5
Match drawn

Nothing much stirred here yesterday, as further torrential rain brought a sudden and premature end to the third Test. With more rain forecast over the next few days, farmers have already moved their cattle to higher ground, a position that might save England's next three-day game inland at Pietermaritzburg, scheduled to start tomorrow.

After two years of drought, the non-stop rain is causing havoc. With widespread flooding making major roads impassable, this mecca for holidaymakers has, ironically, become as isolated as a desert island.

It wouldn't have come as much of a surprise had South Africa's selectors decided that the quickest way to inform Paul Adams of his selection for the last two Tests was to pop a message into a corked bottle, toss it from Durban pier, and let the tides take it round to Cape Town.

Holding a Test series in the rainy season is bound to cause disenchantment, especially from those overseas fans not over in time for the five days of good weather in Johannesburg. Bad luck, perhaps, but have the organisers not also been negligent to some extent in organising the bulk of the Test series at this time of year?

As most climatologists will tell you, South Africa — bar the Cape — receives most of its rainfall in summer. Cricket is therefore at risk, though much of the rain comes in the form of thundery showers, which rarely last long. The widespread frontal rain, which obliterated the first Test at Centurion Park as well as the match here, can last for days and is far more unusual.

**TODAY'S
NUMBER**
38,000

The players the Rugby Football Union expects to lose from its register by bringing its paperwork up to date. The RFU, which has 108,000 players on its books, aims to reduce that figure to 70,000. The present list is thought to contain a number of dead players.

For some reason, given the distances involved, experts believe it is due to a weakening of the "El Nino" effect, which occurs in the Pacific Ocean. "The Child" as it is also known, owing to its five to seven-year cycles, is a series of warm currents that can apparently have widespread effect on the world's weather.

But if local experts blame it for causing recent drought over here, Raymond Illingworth has no such grudge. As news filters through that water is being tankered in to Farsley to ease shortages, he was placing the blame firmly on Yorkshire Water. There are few things as precious to the England chairman as his beloved lawn which, deprived of months of water, now bears little resemblance to the photographs he has of it in his wallet.

However, with two Tests to go, and only one win needed for either side to gain an infallible position, England, if not fearing the departure of "The Child", would do well to heed the arrival of the teenager. Paul Adams's rightful inclusion is what this series and this country have been crying out for since their return to the international fold.

Despite being a fillip for all those involved in development programmes throughout South Africa, it is a timely affirmation to those doubters in the coloured and black communities, still pessimistic about the prospects and pace of real change.

If he plays in the fourth Test he will be, at 18, South Africa's youngest ever Test player, beating A E Oche who had just turned 19 when he played two matches against England in 1988-89. South Africa have also picked the slow left-armers Nicky Boje, but all indications are that Adams will be the front-line spinner, the conveyor of selectors' Peter Pollock, indicating as much when he said: "It wasn't a gamble. We picked him because he fits into our plans at Port Elizabeth. We feel he'll get the ball past the bat."

Responding to the South Africans' bold move, England announced that Phillip DeFreitas, now almost 30, would be joining the team in the new year for the seven-match series of one-dayers that begin after the Cape Town Test. It is a sensible move and one that should have been done far earlier. DeFreitas may have lost a bit of nip in his bowling but he is a brilliant fielder and useful lower-order striker in limited overs cricket.



All dressed up and a long way from home: The Barry Army show their colours in Durban during the third Test

Photograph: Ben Radford/Allsport

Controversial Englishmen abroad

In the East Stand of the Kingsmead cricket ground in Durban two Santos sporting Union Jack capes, sunburned stomachs and Castle Lager leapt up to beat boom drums and sing the England football supporter's anthem "Let's all have a disco".

In response, the bank of about 100 Africans to whom they are performing break into a chorus of the traditional Zulu song *Shosholoz*. The Santos quickly become their conductors. Spectators in other parts of the stand join in until the singing ends in fits of laughter and the Santos come off in search of more lager.

For the Santos it is just another day at the cricket as part of the self-styled "Barry Army" following England's progress throughout South Africa. For the English cricket establishment it is typical of one of the most embarrassing things to happen to the game in years.

Even the torrential rain has not stopped them. They huddle under the stands for a while and then head for the down-town bars to enjoy themselves.

Formed during last winter's Ashes tour of Australia by a group of 40 like-minded cricket fans travelling on a tight budget, the Barry Army have quickly become a phenomenon. Usually no more than 50 or 60 in number, but stronger in voice with their incessant chants of "En-Ge-Land," and "Give Us A Wave Thorpy, Jacky etc", they have established themselves as an unmistakable feature of England matches.

While much of the English media has tended to dismiss them as little more than football hooligans, the local Durban press and television were last week full of features on the friendly invasion of the city's beach-front bars by the colourful England fans making the most of a favourable exchange rate.

The all-drinking, all-chanting, football-shirted Barry Army members have found it a difficult contradiction to live with. Dave Peacock, 28, the parental anger and reproach, what they got was a whirling of Dad's camera and squeals of delight from the children themselves.

The Barry Army, first seen in Australia last year, have invaded South Africa. Despite their image, they are a force for good, says John Cassy in Durban

"We're not hooligans and we're not out to cause trouble. To say we are is rubbish. Most of us are professional people — there are civil servants, solicitors, policemen in our ranks — who have saved hard or given up our jobs to come away. Nearly all of us are members of county clubs and keen players too. Basically we're just out to watch the cricket and have a laugh like anyone else."

In Durban, the nearest they come to confrontation is when they turn in unison to chant. "We're going to pick your sweets and lollipops" at a group of children beating drums against the advertising hoardings in time with the bowler's steps. Instead of being met by the parental anger and reproach, what they got was a whirling of Dad's camera and squeals of delight from the children themselves.

For Allan Freeman, a 41-year-old from Leicester who takes temporary jobs between tours, this sort of reaction is indicative of the reception the Barry Army gets abroad. "On the grassy banks there's lots of banter, banner waving and laughing. Both sets of supporters join in generating a superb atmosphere and the local paper even offers a year's supply of beer for the best banner of the day. Yet in England we're still told it's not cricket," he says.

However for Peacock, one year on since taking voluntary redundancy from National Power to follow the Ashes tour, the Barry Army is now about much more than just atmosphere and having a laugh. The small group of friends has evolved to become a limited company selling a variety of trademarked accommodation and match tickets. Its organi-

sation now occupies most of his time and will subsidise his trip, which he estimates will cost him in the region of £2,500 for three months.

The massive Barry Army T-shirt sales that have accompanied the group's rise are an indicator of its popularity. More than 10,000 have been sold since the first few were printed in Australia last year and, with nearly 5,000 England supporters expected at the final Test in Cape Town in the New Year, Peacock is anticipating another surge in sales.

"The demand for the shirts has been incredible," he says. "We've sold them through the individual cricket unions and have had all sorts of people buying them, including South Africans, Kiwis and Aussies. Even some of the more established English guys on the traditional tours have bought them."

The decision to start organising package tours was not taken lightly but Peacock says there is a big market to be exploited. "Cricket's still an established game and there are loads of cricket fans who have

always wanted to follow England abroad but have never had the opportunity because of the cost. Now people at home are seeing us having fun cheaply and are coming out to join us."

About 40 people are booked on to the first official Barry Army package tour which takes in the Port Elizabeth and Cape Town Tests after Christmas. The emphasis will be on budget travel and having a good time: accommodation will be in £4.50 a night backpacker hostels or university digs, transport will be laid on and heavy nights will be de rigueur. The total package will undercut some of the more established equivalent tours by between £500 and £1,000.

Add to this a scheme that donates one rand to Soweto Cricket Club for every Barry Army T-shirt sold on the tour, and a friendly fixture at the Soweto Oval scheduled for mid-January, and it seems the Barry Army is, in its own way, quickly becoming an established part of England Test cricket. Whether it will ever be a universally accepted part is another matter.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Achievement is one thing; but only when there is warmth of character to go with it does a performer win lasting public affection. For Mary Peters, BBC Sports Personality of 1972, the award recognised her Olympic pentathlon gold but reflected, too, a sunny disposition and that uncommonly wide smile.

She remembers the ceremony as vividly as her 1972 Munich victory. "I didn't know I'd won the award but the first three were tipped off so we would be ready to say a few words in front of Princess Anne, the previous year's winner," Peters recalled. "I said, 'Hear, she kept it clean!' and people still remember that."

Born in Liverpool but brought up in Northern Ireland, Peters retired two years later, after the 1974 Commonwealth Games brought more gold. She has since exploited her popularity with the best possible motives, raising money first to build the Mary Peters Track and then lending support to numerous causes.

A former member of the Sports



Mary Peters

Council, she is on the women's committee of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, is a member of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, president of the Ulster Sports and Recreation Trust, president of the Northern Ireland Lady Bowlers and campaigns for cancer and brittle bone disease charities. "I'm happy with my lot and I have no plans to wind down," she said.

Single and 56 — "I never had time to get married" — she is based near Belfast at Lisburn, where she has run a thriving health club since 1977.

Jon Cullley

Knight sets up series win

Pakistan A 188-8
England A 190-3
England A win by seven wickets

An unbeaten 90 from the opener Nick Knight helped secure victory for England A over Pakistan A in the second one-day international in Faisalabad yesterday.

A seven-wicket victory also clinched the one-day series 2-0 with one match still to play. England also won the three-match Test series 1-0.

England bowled and fielded better than in their first 40-over match, restricting the Pakistanis to a 186 for 6 on a flat, low pitch which offered little help to the bowlers.

The opener Shahid Anwar

battled through the innings but his runs dried up towards the end as Richard Stemp, Ronnie Irani and Dean Headley kept him mainly to singles.

England's reply began with Knight being dropped off the second ball. He then picked up two leg-side sixes and put on 110 in 21 overs with the fluent Nasser Hussain, who scored 50 off only 67 balls.

"Now we've won the one-day series as well it will be hard to fully motivate the lads for the final match but it would be nice to go through the tour unbeaten," Hussain, the captain, said.

The Hampshire spinner Shaun Udai is returning home early from the tour after his month-old daughter was taken ill. The tourists, who play their final one-day game tomorrow, are due to return home on Friday but Udai was given permission to fly out early after his daughter was taken into hospital. "It's only a precaution but Shaun understandably feels he wishes to be with his family," Tim Lamb, the TCCB spokesman said.

(England A won last)
PAKISTAN A
Shahid Anwar not out...57
Nasser Hussain c Knight b Gidhara...3
Saeed Anwar c Knight b Gidhara...3
Yasir Agha c White b Stemp...42
Mansoor Rana c Knight b Stemp...3
Zahid Fazal not out...11
Kamran Mahmood b Headley...26
Hussain Raza not out...5
Extras (bats, w.l., n.o.)...5
Total (for 6, 40 overs)...188
Fall: 1-37, 2-26, 3-108, 4-132, 5-132, 6-180.
Did not bat: Shahid Nadez, Salim Fazal, Ali Gohar.
Bowling: Mairan 8-1-22-0; Gidhara 8-1-26-2; Stemp 8-0-38-2; Headley 8-0-42-1; Irani 4-0-19-0; White 4-0-34-1.

ENGLAND A
N V Knight not out...90
D P Stemp c Anwar Mahmood...24
N Hussain b Anwar Mahmood...50
J C Pooley not out...12
R C Irani not out...8
Extras (bats, w.l.)...8
Total (for 3, 30.3 overs)...190
Fall: 1-48, 2-158, 3-176.
Did not bat: Gidhara, Ali Gohar, D W Headley, R D Stemp, E S H Gidhara, T A Mairan.
Bowling: Shahid Nadez 7-0-29-0; Ali Gohar 4-0-24-0; Anwar Mahmood 7-3-33-2; Hussain Raza 6-0-25-0; Saeed Anwar 3-0-17-0; Shahid Anwar 5-0-30-0; Zahid Fazal 6-0-26-0.
Umpires: Mian Mohammad Aslam and Perce Butt.

West Indies 'never this bad'

England may have difficulty filling the No 3 position in the batting order, but that is nothing compared with the problems facing the West Indies, for whom things seem to be going from bad to worse.

Their captain, Richie Richardson, who has witnessed an alarming slump culminating in the West Indies' record 121-run limited overs defeat in a World Series match against Australia on Sunday, said: "I've never seen it before, I've seen us have one or two bad matches but never four in a row."

The West Indies top order, weakened by the absence of Brian Lara, has struggled for form since arriving in Australia at the start of the month for the triangular one-day competition, which also features Sri Lanka. "Our problem is we've got players who are capable, but who have to find form," Richardson told reporters in

Melbourne, the venue for Tuesday's World Series fixture against Australia. "We've just got to get one score. If we get one score and get our confidence back, the slump in form could be over."

Lara withdrew from the tour after being fined for a breach of discipline during the Test series in England earlier this year. While efforts continued in the West Indies to convince Lara to make himself available for February's World Cup, Richardson said the left-hander would not be recalled for the rest of the current tour. "I just want to concentrate on the players here, but whatever the problem is I just hope it can be resolved," he said.

The dismal performance against Australia at Adelaide Oval on Sunday followed a four-wicket loss to Sri Lanka on the same ground two days earlier. In their warm-up games, the

tourists were humiliated in an eight-wicket defeat by the Australian Cricket Academy, a young side with virtually no first-class experience. That performance followed an equally poor display against a weak New South Wales state side, who were denied victory by rain on the final day.

But Richardson appeared to rule out sweeping team changes for today's encounter with Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"I don't think a change in the team will solve our problem," he said, adding: "The spirit is good because we're better than what we're showing, and we've just got to turn things around."

Australia's media are thoroughly enjoying the West Indies' recent suffering. Typical of their glee was the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper's description of the tourists yesterday morning as the "Worst Windies".

Club game shoulders the blame

Rugby Union
STEVE BALE

England's inability to develop the fluid and adventurous rugby about which talk has been cheap was yesterday blamed — as most of England's ills have been over recent years — on the standard of the club rugby which is supposed to prepare players for international matches.

In Jack Rowell's absence another selector, John Elliott, was belatedly summoned to Twickenham yesterday to face a press conference arranged by the Rugby Football Union. Elliott said the widely condemned performance in beating Western Samoa 27-9 would not deflect Rowell from his ambition to be ambitious. The manager had appeared to suggest England would have to revert to more tried, tested and more boring means.

"It's not easy to sit there hearing the England side booted," Elliott said. "We are looking for a more ambitious game than we have in the past. It is, however, difficult to put that style into practice and it's also not being helped by the fact that a lot of our players in their league clubs are not having the opportunity week-in week-out to play that type of game."

Elliott, the RFU's national player development officer and a former England reserve hooker, might have added that such is the way the season is structured most England players had not had the opportunity to play any type of rugby during the four weeks since the defeat by South Africa.

As his eight years as a selector span both the Geoff Cooke and Rowell eras, Elliott will recall Cooke condemning the quality of English club rugby as long ago as the end of the 1990 tour to Argentina. Managers both then and now identified the need for an intermediate level and, though the RFU yesterday formally announced the abolition of the Divisional Championship, this is not the end of divisional rugby.

Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, said that as well as the visit already scheduled by Argentina, there would almost certainly be a second autumn Test against unnamed opponents — thought to be New Zealand — and there might even be a third. In addition, regular tours by leading southern-hemisphere provincial sides, arranged by the RFU rather than on the present ad-hoc basis, would begin next season.

All of which may just help Rowell and Elliott. "With the skills of the players we have, we have to be more patient," Elliott said. "When Geoff came in he was left with such a poor base he literally had to teach players to do certain things."

That includes decision-making and I don't think decision-making comes easily to Englishmen. We have to get more decision-makers, particularly at Nos 8, 9 and 10."

One decision that will soon be taken is whether the member clubs of the RFU will go along with the International Board by abandoning the word amateur. It may come as a surprise to find this still needs doing, but the special general meeting in Birmingham on 14 January will at least have the unanimous recommendation of the RFU committee to accept the *fait accompli*.

Hallett and the union's president, Bill Bishop, said yesterday that they did not anticipate a small clubs' uprising. "If there were a backlash from the grass roots we would be in some trouble," Bishop said. "I don't want to be the president when this great union breaks up."

Mark Ring, the former Wales middlefield player, has withdrawn from his transfer to West Hartlepool after accepting a job as a development officer with Cardiff. The Welsh champions have appointed Terry Holmes, the former scrum-half, as senior coach in succession to Alex Evans, who has gone home to be coaching director of the Australian Rugby Union.

Brawl on ice comes under police scrutiny

Ice hockey
STEVE PINDER

Police investigations into the brawl between Durham Wasps and Sheffield Steelers have put the British Ice Hockey Association under the microscope.

Durham Wasps' 6-6 draw against Sheffield Steelers was overshadowed by an incident half-way through the game when Wasps' Ross Lambert received an eye injury after a clash with Steelers' Nicky Chinn. Lambert needed nearly 20 stitches and Chinn was thrown out of the game. He was then questioned by local police and released on bail with any decision on charges to be taken in the New Year.

Chinn, dismissed for excessive rough play, is automatically banned for three matches and the British Ice Hockey Association will decide on any further disciplinary action after the police have made their decision.

Given that Durham Wasps' Rick Brebant was recently banned for 12 matches after a clash left his opponent needing extensive mouth-stitching, it is unlikely the punishment will be less. It could be considerably more given that the loss of an eye through a stick wielded in anger could have ended Lambert's career.

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Chair leaders: Cleveland Browns fans vent their anger over the team's move after the last match at the Municipal Stadium on Sunday

Photograph: Stephen Dunn/Allsport

Browns' move catches the modern mood

Some wept. Others cursed. Before the game started, instead of tearing tickets ushers stamped them with a commemorative seal. When it was over, out on the Dawg Pound bleachers where the fans are the fiercest and the winds from Lake Erie the most frigid, they let off firecrackers and hurled rows of ancient wooden seats on to the field. And everyone wanted to get their hands round the throat of Art Modell, owner of the Browns, betrayer of the entire city of Cleveland, and understandably nowhere to be seen.

This year of 1995 has been one to drive the best adjusted Cleveland sports fan into the arms of his psychiatrist. Just two months ago there was the joyous spectacle of the Indians, baseball's eternal laughing stock, turning history on its head and reaching the World Series for the first time in 40 years. Now, instead of rapturous disbelief, terminal despair.

Sporting goods stores across the city are knee deep in unsold Browns bric-a-brac. But who wants to buy a dead man's

America's major sports are at the mercy of the franchise owners and there is no room for romance — the team goes where the money is. Rupert Cornwell reports

clothes? The Cleveland Browns, part of the landscape of northern Ohio for half a century, among the oldest, most famous and well supported franchises in the National Football League are leaving town — uprooted by their owner and the irresistible appeal of mega-bucks in Baltimore. Such though is the norm of this era of the wandering US major league sports franchise.

On Sunday the Browns played their 34th and almost certainly their last game at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium, that gelid sandstone cavern better known as the Misake By The Lake, the lovable precisely because it was so awful. The game was an all-Ohio affair against the Cincinnati Bengals. For the record the Browns won 26-10, their first win in six games since Modell did the deed with Baltimore. Theoretically, NFL owners could veto the move when they meet next month. Just possibly Congress will pass a proposed "Fan Protection

Act" that would have the same effect. The Cleveland city fathers, meanwhile, are taking Modell to court in a last ditch effort to make him honour a lease which runs until 1998.

In fact, however, it will take not an Act of Congress but an Act of God to prevent the Browns from becoming merely the latest casualties of the demented but ruthless sporting economics that are sending tremors through the established orders of not just American football, but hockey and baseball as well. Art Modell claims to lose more than \$10m (£6m) a year on the Browns at antiquated Municipal Stadium. Baltimore however has virtually guaranteed him annual profits of \$30m — not to mention the privilege of playing in a brand new purpose built arena, whose \$200m bill is being footed by the taxpayers of Baltimore and the state of Maryland. A generous bridging loan from a local bank is even taking care of the move-

ing costs. And there is nothing Cleveland can do about it.

Forget Senators, Congressmen and the mightiest big city mayor. They are pawns in the hands of the true dictators of modern America, the owners of the major league sports franchises. The reason is quite simple: there are too few teams for the cities that would like to have one. Hence a bidding war and from the owners' point of view, the seller's market to end them all.

No matter that week in, week out for five decades, 70,000 Clevelanders have turned out on Sunday afternoons to cheer the Browns. Such loyalty counts as nothing against the huge revenues to be generated from the \$100,000-a-year skyboxes for corporate dignitaries, with which any modern stadium necessarily bristles. Too late did Cleveland wake up to the fact. Last month, the city approved a \$175m "sin tax" on alcohol and cigarettes, to modernise

Municipal Stadium. A couple of days earlier, Modell had signed up with Baltimore.

There is at least a certain rough justice in the destination. Back in 1984 Baltimore was at the wrong end of its own team relocation, which hit the local Colts were moved, literally overnight, to Indianapolis. Now such moves threaten to become commonplace. "If the Browns can go, then no professional sports team is safe," insists Michael White, Cleveland's Mayor, with some justification.

As the final whistle sounded in Cleveland and Browns players ran over to salute the Dawg Pound faithful a final time, the Houston Oilers were playing perhaps their final NFL game at the ageing Astrodome before switching to Nashville, where a state of the art \$390m arena awaits. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Arizona Cardinals will be on the move as well. In

hockey, teams from Winnipeg and Quebec have migrated south of the 49th parallel. And only an anti-trust exemption dating from 1922 prevents a complete re-drawing of the baseball map.

The Houston Astros, the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Minnesota Twins are among teams which would move if they could. Indeed, the Astros ownership had signed away the team to a North Virginia investors' group before the deal was vetoed by the league. Even the most famous franchise of them all, the New York Yankees, could be in danger. George Steinbrenner, the Yankees' owner, threatens to take the team from Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, its home for 72 years, to the richer pastures of New Jersey unless he gets a new arena — paid for, naturally, by the taxpayer.

But even for Cleveland, all is not lost. The Bengals are said to be angling for a new stadium in Cincinnati. If they do not get one, their rumoured destination is... Cleveland. Enter therefore the Cleveland Bengals. True, they won't be the Browns. But at least it is a team.

Switzer taking centre stage in Dallas drama

MATT TENCH

After the fortnight he's had, Barry Switzer was grateful just to win, but Sunday's defeat of the New York Giants will do little to calm the clamour in Dallas. True the Cowboys ended a two-game losing streak with a 21-20 victory, but it needed a Chris Boniol field goal as time ran out to do so, and the feeling grows that Switzer's side, overwhelming favourites to win the Super Bowl six weeks ago, remain in something approaching crisis.

However the Cowboys have begun to look vulnerable since the defeat by the San Francisco 49ers a month ago, with Switzer widely blamed for the losses. The Giants threatened a third in a row, and held the lead for most

of the game thanks to the rushing of Rodney Hampton, who accumulated a career-high 187 yards against a defense that was once thought among the league's elite.

Emmitt Smith managed a touchdown, to tie the NFL record for a season at 24, but otherwise the Cowboys were kept out of the end zone, and it needed five Boniol field goals, the last from 35 yards, to secure victory. It will do little to cool the heat on Switzer. Dallas fans grew accustomed in the Jimmy Johnson era to having one of the

shrewdest coaches in the league. They are not so keen on a representative from the other end of the scale.

Talking of Johnson, his chances of starting next season as the new head coach of the Miami Dolphins increased significantly as the present incumbent, the legendary Don Shula (as he is almost invariably described) watched his team lose to the Buffalo Bills. Thurman Thomas proved a familiar nemesis, rushing for 148 yards and notching a pair of TDs.

The game was level at 20-20

in the fourth quarter when David White picked off Dan Marino's pass to set up the winning field goal. "I wish I could give you a reason why we continue to lose games we should win, but I can't," Marino said. "I made a mistake on the interception. I wish I had the pass back."

Victory gave the Bills their sixth AFC East title in eight years, and though the Dolphins can still make the play-offs their chances of making substantial progress, given the number of away victories that would now involve, appear slim.

For Shula only a Super Bowl appearance may save his job.

The Los Angeles Raiders are also seeing a promising season wane before their eyes. The 44-10 defeat in Seattle was their fifth in a row, and their biggest defeat in nine years.

Cruising in the opposite direction are the Detroit Lions, whose 44-0 spanking of the Jacksonville Jaguars was their sixth win in a row. It is a measure of their more well-rounded attacking approach that Barry Sanders was only required to rush for 76 yards.

KP withdraw after summer of discontent

Athletics

British athletics has lost the sponsor of its two biggest meetings, KP Foods, who have decided not to exercise an option to renew a two-year agreement worth around £2m.

KP were unhappy with the controversy surrounding the London Grand Prix at Crystal Palace and the AAA Championships in Birmingham this summer.

However Tony Ward, the British Athletic Federation's spokesman, said yesterday a deal with a replacement sponsor had been "signed and sealed".

"What new sponsors will match what KP did," Ward said. "These two are big money meetings and need a lot of promotion, especially this season."

Lindford Christie, Colin Jackson and John Regis missed the Grand Prix this summer because of a pay dispute with the British Athletic Federation and the attendance was badly hit.

In Birmingham a week later Christie came under fire when he was allowed to run in the 100 metres final as a guest after failing to qualify; and Jackson upset officials after pulling out after one round of the 100m with a groin muscle injury, then winning a sprint hurdles race in Italy 24 hours later.

Graf's father stays in jail

Tennis

Steffi Graf's father failed yesterday with another attempt to get out of prison while public prosecutors investigate allegations that the family evaded millions of pounds in taxes. A judge in Mannheim ruled that Peter Graf should stay in prison in case he fled the country or interfered with the evidence during the investigation.

Graf, who has managed his daughter's finances since early in her career, was detained last August. He made the new request to be released at a hearing last Friday.

Steffi Graf, whose lifetime earnings of are thought to be more than 100m marks (£45m),

Herbert signs for Sauber

Motor racing

Johnny Herbert, the British Grand Prix winner, will race alongside Germany's Heinz-Harald Frentzen for the Ford-powered Sauber team in 1996.

Herbert, who also won this year's Italian Grand Prix at Benetton, will have his first test with Sauber at the Le Castellet track in southern France later this week.

Peter Sauber, the team chief, said: "We have taken the decision after careful consideration. We feel he will be able to make a very positive contribution to our team after his good results this season and with

American football

NFL: Buffalo 23 Miami 20; Carolina 21 Atlanta 17; Chicago 31 Tampa Bay 10; Cleveland 26 Cincinnati 10; Dallas 44 Jacksonville 0; Houston 23 NY Jets 6; Philadelphia 23 Arizona 22; Washington 33 St Louis 23; Dallas 23 NY Giants 20; San Diego 27 Indianapolis 24; Kansas City 20 Denver 17; Seattle 14 Oakland 10.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
EASTERN DIVISION
Buffalo 10 W L T PF PA
Miami 8 7 0 333 307
Carolina 8 7 0 321 309
Houston 8 7 0 337 310
New England 8 7 0 287 367
Jacksonville 8 7 0 333 372

CENTRAL DIVISION
Pittsburgh 11 4 0 388 303
Cincinnati 8 7 0 320 307
Houston 8 7 0 337 310
Cleveland 8 7 0 333 372
Dallas 8 7 0 333 372

WESTERN DIVISION
Kansas City 12 3 0 332 238
Oakland 8 7 0 350 301
Seattle 8 7 0 360 340
San Diego 8 7 0 367 317
Denver 8 7 0 357 317

NFL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
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SPORTING DIGEST

WESTERN DIVISION
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SPORT

CRICKET: Whatever happened to the Barmy Army?

24

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Fear and loathing in Cleveland

25

Venables close to new contract

Football

The Football Association is finalising plans to extend Terry Venables' contract as England coach to 1999.

Venables had talks with the FA's chief executive, Graham Kelly, at this weekend's European Championship draw in Birmingham to discuss a proposal by the chairman, Sir Bert Millichip, to keep him at the helm until after the 1998 World Cup. They plan a further meeting in the next few days and that could complete the negotiations to secure Venables' position, which has been the subject of speculation following the coach's recent court appearance.

"It is entirely correct that Terry had an informal meeting with Graham in Birmingham and I understand that they will be talking again later this week," David Davies, the FA's public affairs executive, said.

Venables, eager to take up the challenge set in Paris last week when England were drawn against Italy, Poland, Georgia and Moldova in the World Cup qualifying campaign, wanted his future secured in advance of the Euro '96 finals. After England were pitched against Scotland, the Netherlands and Switzerland in Sunday's draw, he is confident he can conjure a home performance next summer to justify Millichip's faith.

But opposition from within the

15-strong International Committee could prevent the quick approval of a deal negotiated on the initiative of the chairman, who will retire as Venables begins his extra three years. There was an undercurrent of discontent in Birmingham, with the committee determined to have their say and puzzled by the rush to sign him up before they have their next meeting, which is scheduled for the end of January.

Charlie Thomas, a veteran committee member, described Venables as "an embarrassment" after his latest court appearance, when he lost one suit brought by Jeff Fugler but survived a meeting with the Official Receiver. Some of Thomas's colleagues share his

concern about Venables' off-field activities and they certainly believe the FA should wait until the Premier League inquiry into transfer dealings makes its expected report next month.

The extraneous payments made around Tottenham's signing of Teddy Sheringham from Nottingham Forest, which Venables confirmed in the Central London County Court last Thursday, are one issue. Venables also faces a move by the Department of Trade and Industry to disbar him as a company director, and has further litigation, including libel actions, coming up.

Millichip, who retires after next summer's championships, insists that nothing has emerged

from what Venables describes as "a conspiracy" to undermine the FA investigations that cleared him before his initial appointment.

"I am entirely happy with the way England are going. I think Terry is on the right lines and I don't want him going into the European Championship thinking he is going to get the sack, because he is not," he said.

However, even this FA line is losing its unity. "Would you give your manager a new, improved contract when all he has done is take you through the preliminaries?" said one influential official in Birmingham.

Noel White, the committee's chairman, is uneasy at making that commitment before Ven-

ables has proved himself in the heat of battle and several committee members made the point that his England record is hardly overwhelming. He has won only six out of 14 completed friendlies, though he has lost just one, to world champions Brazil.

His predecessor, Graham Taylor, did even better, winning 10 and losing just one of his first 14 games, and five of those games were competitive.

"Of course the International Committee's views are taken into consideration and any decision taken obviously needs their approval," Davies said yesterday.

White holds the key. Millichip and Kelly are convinced Venables is the right man for the

future. If they can persuade the Liverpool director, the committee would avoid setting a precedent by rejecting a unanimous proposal presented by the FA chairman, chief executive and their own chairman.

Scotland are to receive fewer than 10,000 tickets for next June's Euro '96 game against England at Wembley. Euro '96 officials confirmed yesterday that the first England-Scotland match for seven years is already a 76,000 sell-out. There is likely to be an increase of only a couple of thousand, if any, on Scotland's original 7,000 allocation for the match on 15 June.

Scotland may receive greater allocations for their two games at Villa Park against the Nether-

Venables: Talks continue

lands on 10 June and Switzerland on 18 June, although tickets are selling fast at the Birmingham venue. Tickets have been on sale since October last year and with people knowing England were to play at Wembley it was inevitable that these games would prove more popular than other venues.

Merry-go-round in full swing

The managerial vacancies at Leicester and Norwich City appeared no closer to being filled yesterday, while Luton Town's Terry Westley became the latest managerial casualty.

At Carrow Road there was official confirmation that O'Neill's assistant, Paul Franklin, will take charge of the Norwich side for tomorrow night's Coca-Cola Cup replay at Bolton.

But there was no comment from Filbert Street over reports that O'Neill could be about to move in. Mike Walker, the former Norwich and Everton manager, was interviewed by Leicester last week but he may now be approached by Luton. O'Neill's resignation, following a dispute over lack of funds with the chairman, Robert Chase, brought an angry reaction from fans. Chase, for his part, reiterated that 43-year-old O'Neill's resignation had not been accepted, meaning that compensation will be

due to the club if O'Neill, appointed in the summer, accepts another offer.

The Leicester chairman, Martin George, is away on business and a spokesman for the club said it was too soon to comment on speculation. But O'Neill has made no secret of the fact that he very nearly accepted the offer to join Leicester after Brian Little's departure last season and that the prospect of becoming manager at the club did appeal to him.

If O'Neill does end up at Filbert Street, Walker could be on his way to Kenilworth Road after Westley's troubled six-month tenure was officially ended by "mutual consent". Westley, who succeeded David Pleat in July, has steered Luton to just four wins in 22 league games, with the Hatters plunging to the bottom of the First Division, and has run the gauntlet of angry fans.

After announcing that West-

ley—who has agreed a compensation package for the remaining seven months of his contract—had become the 15th managerial departure of the season, David Kohler, the Luton chairman, said: "I feel very sorry for Terry. I wanted him to do well but we've spent more than £2m on players and are bottom of the First Division. Something clearly is wrong and something had to be done before it was too late."

Westley's assistant, the former Ipswich manager Mick McGovern, was also shown the door by Kohler, who revealed he was looking to appoint a new man before Saturday's game with Huddersfield. He refused to confirm or deny that 50-year-old Walker was in the frame but did say: "I want a man who has experience and can get us out of this difficult situation. We will certainly not be promoting from within."

"My phone has been ringing all the time with men wanting the job. Some of them are well known names. I shall be speaking to a couple of them today."

Graham Kelly, chief executive of the Football Association, has launched an FA campaign to help English clubs in European competition. If the plan is approved, clubs will have four days clear of domestic fixtures before European matches and the option of a bye in the two-legged Coca-Cola Cup second round. The proposals, which will require FA Premier League and Football League approval, have been made in response to complaints from club managers about shortage of time available for preparations before European matches.

Aston Villa's Dwight Yorke could be out until the middle of next month after having an operation on his broken nose.

Le Saux resigned to missing Euro '96

Graeme Le Saux yesterday had to admit that his chances of playing in next summer's European Championship finals were remote.

The England defender was carried off during Blackburn's 1-0 victory over Middlesbrough at Ewood Park on Saturday. Yesterday, Le Saux's agent, Jon Holmes, confirmed that the player sustained a broken tibia, a dislocated ankle and a ruptured tendon in his right leg after landing awkwardly while making a challenge on Juninho of Middlesbrough.

Le Saux's sister, Jeanette, admitted that he has been left devastated by the news as he recuperates in the Highfield private hospital in Rochdale. After visiting him she said: "Obviously he's very upset and distraught about it but he's just got to come to terms with it like everyone else."

It is the second time this season that Le Saux has been sidelined by a serious ankle problem—he missed eight games when he suffered a nasty injury in the Premiership encounter with Coventry in September.

George soars to an even greater height



Reaching for the sky: Emma George, 21, of Australia, used a borrowed pole when she cleared 4.28 metres to break her own pole vault world record by three centimetres at a meeting in Perth, Australia. Photograph: Tony Ashby/AP

Edberg calls time on Sweden's golden era

Stefan Edberg's retirement, announced yesterday, a month before his 30th birthday, represents more than the loss of a great player; it signifies the end of the golden age of Swedish tennis, which began with the rise of the phenomenal Bjorn Borg in the early 1970s.

The London-based Edberg, who won the Wimbledon singles title in 1988 and 1990—the year he became world No 1—also achieved two victories at both the United States and Australian championships. He last tasted success when Sweden won the Davis Cup in Moscow last December. After a decade ranked in the top 10, Edberg has slipped to No 23.

"I thought it was best to announce my decision now. Every-one keeps asking when I'm quitting. It will be in a year's time, whether I'm ranked second or 100 in the world," Edberg said. Edberg added that his last tournament would be the Stockholm Open in his native Sweden next November.

Edberg, who formed the third link in a chain of success with Borg and Mats Wilander, was a totally different type of player to the other two, decidedly unSwedish with his elegant serve-volley style. Whereas Borg and Wilander constructed points chiefly from the baseline, Edberg's net play has been one of the joys of the sport for the past 12 years. So, too, has his magnificent backhand, and his knack of spinning the second serve, so that the ball would "kick" away from opponents, was another effective weapon.

In common with Borg and Wilander, Edberg had a sound temperament, but during his early years on the professional tour his downbeat body lan-

guage cost him a number of important matches.

His coach, Tony Pickard, from Nottingham, deservedly was given credit for coaxing the reserved Edberg to overcome "the droops" and lift his chin in adversity. His resilience was never more evident than during the 1992 United States Open.

Having given a sublime per-



Stefan Edberg: twice won the Wimbledon singles title

formance to win the title in 1991, dismantling Jim Courier in the final, 6-2, 6-4, 6-0, Edberg performed a breathtaking series of escapes in successfully defending the championship the following year.

Before defeating Pete Sampras in the 1992 final, he extricated himself from being a break down in the fifth set of three consecutive matches, against Richard Krajicek, Ivan Lendl and Michael Chang. The semi-final against Chang lasted

five hours and 26 minutes, a Grand Slam record.

It was Chang who denied Edberg the one major title missing from his collection, climaxing a prodigious performance at the 1989 French Open by defeating the Swede in the final, 6-2 in the fifth set. Chang, aged 17 and three months, emerged as the youngest male to win a Grand Slam singles title.

Edberg, who won two of his three duels with Boris Becker in Wimbledon finals, holds a unique record which began at the All England Club—he has participated in 50 consecutive Grand Slam tournaments.

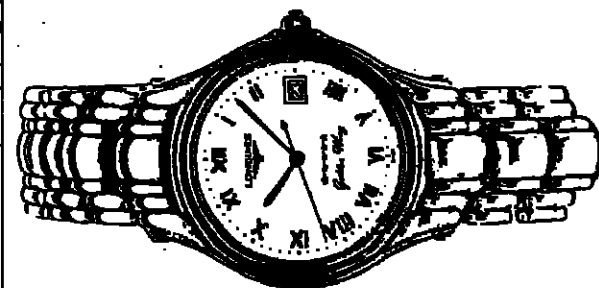
In a sport frequently beset by absenteeism among leading players, Edberg did not miss any of the four major championships, from defeating Christophe Roger-Vasselin, of France, in the first round at Wimbledon in 1983, to losing to Andre Agassi, of the United States, in the third round of this year's US Open, when the Swede was unseeded for the first time in a decade.

When the one hundred per cent attendance record began, 12 years ago, Edberg not only made his debut in the main draws at Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open, but simultaneously became the first player, male or female, to accomplish a junior Grand Slam.

The policeman's son from Västervik also played a part in Sweden's four Davis Cup triumphs in the last 11 years, marking his debut in the 1984 final by partnering Anders Jarryd to a doubles win against the Americans Peter Fleming and John McEnroe.

Moreover, Edberg's behaviour throughout his career has never been anything less than exemplary.

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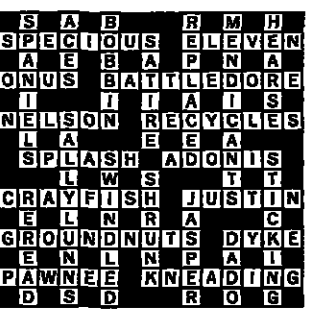
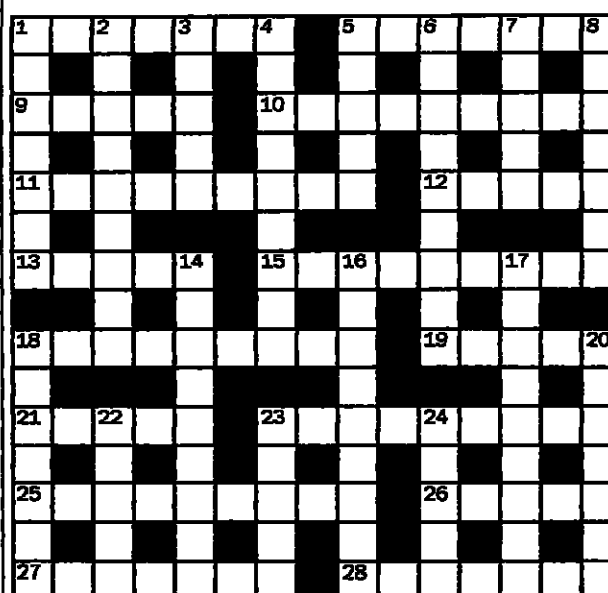
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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2861. Tuesday 19 December

By Aeked

Monday's Solution



ACROSS

- 1 Possible financial advice which perks you up? (3,4)
- 5 Ben, worn out, at no age at all? (3,4)
- 9 Beat the un-English cheat? (5)
- 10 One Frenchman joining a kind of body is unwise (9)
- 11 Support i.e. try changes of fitness (9)
- 12 Writer's given Church of England money (5)
- 13 In which one takes steps to make effects of UV depart (5)
- 15 Tired wash, unsatisfactory in this? (9)
- 18 Be levered awkwardly into summer house (9)
- 19 Come to preacher for one to be dismissed (5)
- 21 Joints of meat right out of ovens (5)
- 23 Anti-Luddite? (9)

DOWN

- 2 Aquiline pirate was inquisitive (4,5)
- 26 Feature no cotton twill (5)
- 27 Comparatively embarrassed about European animal (3,4)
- 28 Could be frosty about new underwear (1,6)
- 1 Bread's just right, sound (3,1,3)
- 2 Beattie's representative comes up not having name of staff (9)
- 3 A doctor's hesitation seeing warning of danger? (5)
- 4 Cutter also anchor that's awfully fine on the inside (5,4)
- 5 Something needed by baby when sleeping? (5)
- 6 Strength of mind executor has? (9)

- 7 X's seen frequently (5)
- 8 Obscure leading characters changing a branch of physics (7)
- 14 To live in canoe is unusual as honour (9)
- 16 24-hour fibulster which some pupils find rewarding? (6,5)
- 17 Criminally into triad? This could be handed down (9)
- 18 Worry about King's sibling (7)
- 20 Perhaps greyhounds after race will need food (3,4)
- 22 Naggish old woman is friend (5)
- 23 Mena type of island in sea off France? (5)
- 24 Become liable for popular type of dog (5)

سازا من المرحله